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[PRICE ONE PENNY.]



[THE DWARF.]

LADY VIOLET'S VICTIMS.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE PANELLLED CHAMBER.

For over all there hung a cloud of fear,
A sense of mystery the spirit daunted,
And said as plain as whisper in the ear:
The place is haunted!

In one of the smaller rooms on the second floor of the doctor's mansion Lady Constance sat alone. She looked so panic-stricken one might wonder if she were awake or asleep. She dreaded lest they had prepared some fearful doom for her in this silent chamber which was panellled, except on one side; that some spectral form would haunt the lonely night hours, and upon which her eyes would rest instead upon the adoring gaze of the man from whom she was sundered. And yet she was so utterly miserable; she had wept so long, ghosts and spectres must be objects of indifference even if they presented themselves.

"And after all I shall die of love," she cried, her mind returning with dangerous force to all the whispered words and smiling homage of one whose tenderness flooded her soul with ecstasy.

Her present fate is too awful to contemplate, so she lives on the past, and gains scraps of comfort from memory's page.

Silent grief is destructive, and now her eyes seemed to have wept till they had exhausted all power of weeping; stifled sobs ended in convulsions, and her hands twitched nervously.

And yet strength was marvellously given her; she could suppress all outward signs of tumult when strangers appeared. She spoke to Tessa in a coldly tranquil voice, as if she were the victim of a mistake that must soon be rectified. She was dignified to the doctor and nurses. Pride re-conquered her.

"They shall find I have the courage to endure and hope on," she murmured. Faith in Lionel's love sustained her. But her food remained untasted by her side. Her beautiful hair had been cut off by the doctor's orders, and attired in a plain dark serge dress, she looked like some simple nun or abbess banished to a dark cell for some omission of duty.

The awful monotony of the place she believed in time must affect her reason, for this was only the fifth day of her imprisonment. Her hysterical sobs had ceased, something like despair would soon bring calmness and apathy.

Was the place haunted?

Scarcely a sound reached her ears save the occasional rough voices of some groom or coachman from the stable-yard below, or the scream of a child, as its mother gave it "her blessing" in anything but a mild way. Now and then the butler, after the evening dinner was over, would play a few cheerful tunes on a concertina that set two terriers howling dismally, and then again Tessa's loud, shrill voice, invoking half a dozen patron saints as she inspected her husband's wringing machines, jarred on Lady Constance's nerves. The maddening terror of feeling she was really cut off from all human aid or sympathy nearly distracted her senses.

Could she ever escape? What did they intend doing with her? Would Lionel come to her aid?

There was also a strange, faint, sickly odour in the room that often overpowered her; at times it seemed unbearable. It came from a distant corner of the room over a partition, from which heavy black curtains hung as a funeral pall.

"If I could leave the room for one of a purer atmosphere," she thought, "I might live. This awful odour affects my sleep and appetite. It is some slowly-decaying corpse they have bricked up between the walls?"

The histories she had read of people walled up alive occurred to her mind; of victims immured in dreary castles. She remembered Sir Walter Scott's hapless Constance de Beverley, and wondered if they meant to act the same towards herself.

The wretched girl cowered aside, knowing how stern and relentless were both her father and sister, and having once delivered her up as "insane," it was not likely they would own their error and contrition by speedily removing her from the doctor's care.

She mentioned at present to none her suspicions of a corpse being found between the walls; the heavy black velvet curtains still hung like sentinels of doom before her, and the unearthly smell still remained to infect the air.

"Must I remain here till I am driven mad?" she cried, wringing her hands as she hastily paced the floor. "Oh, Lionel! Lionel! You so brave, so fearless! save me from this awful fate—this living death."

The windows of the room were barred, so it was impossible to think of escaping that way. When the doctor visited her he invariably turned the key in the lock on the outside.

Tessa was too careless, too ignorant to be moved to pity her, and the nurses seemed indifferent to bribes. She must communicate with someone from the outer world, but how?

As she was sitting to-night, her head resting on her hands, she heard a faint scratching which seemed to come from the panelling above the fire-place. The dim light and the sudden break in the monotony made her nervous. The noise presently ceased, and then she distinctly heard a low tapping in another part of the panelling. The lamp which was placed on a small table by her side left one part of the room in almost total darkness. She looked at the heavy curtains by the side of the fire-place, and summoning all her courage, Lady Constance rose from her seat, and taking the lamp in her hand, pulled the curtains aside. There was nothing but an old oil-painting, the beauty of which was defaced by time and dust. She noticed that the same faint odour which almost took away her breath issued from behind the picture.

She determined that when it was daylight she would try and remove the painting, and see what was the cause of the unpleasant smell. The tapping now seemed to come from another part of the room; she crept slowly to the door, which was heavily barred, and found it useless to attempt to open it. She waited breathlessly, gazing at the panel, which seemed to be slowly moving.

Was this madness, she wondered, or was it a dream, and would she wake to find herself by Lionel's side? She walked over towards the moving panel, and distinctly saw a man's face peer at her from within; she gave a faint scream, as the man entered, and the panel closed with a spring. A singular apparition met her view, it was the figure of a dwarf, who clutched her arm with his long, bony fingers, and gave a little shrill laugh.

"You expected some monster, I suppose, of the goblin species," he said, gazing at Lady Constance's ghastly pale face. "Pray cease trembling, I am perfectly harmless. Yes, feel my hand, it is not ghost-like or shadowy—a substantial palm, is it not?"

Lady Constance felt grateful for the sound of a human voice, yet she dreaded this strange being, but thought it best to be civil or he might do her harm. She wondered whether he was a dangerous lunatic. This fear neutralised the joy of hearing sounds again.

"You will not harm me, will you?" she implored. "Oh, sir, be my friend; help me to escape from this hateful place."

The dwarf, after marching round the room twice, perched himself on a high deal box at the further end, and began to cough violently.

"Pardon me, but have you detected a noisome stench from this wall?" he said, jumping from the box, and shaking the velvet curtains. Two moths flew out and flickered about the lamp, and amused Lady Constance during the evening when she was left alone again with only the dim burning of the lamp to cheer her gloom.

"Let us hope it is rats," he said, lightly. "I don't wish to injure your nerves (already severely shaken) by a more ghastly conjecture. All the rooms are panelled, and many have secret springs; this is useful in case the doctor has any unexpected visitors, and the patients can then be hastily drugged and drawn into other apartments without arousing suspicions, or they can be laid between the panels. I am so small I can squeeze myself through very small spaces, and I pay visits to several of the doctor's patients when he is dining. I have been here three years. I am as sane as you are, and yet I never expect to regain my liberty."

Lady Constance was a good deal relieved in one respect, regarding his communication, the other rendered her mournful.

"My room is barred like yours," he muttered. "I never see the light of day, and yet I am alive; so will you be very likely after a similar experience; but, being a philosopher, and knowing it is very improbable much admiration will be mine from your sex, I accommodate myself to circumstances, and, like the prisoner

of Chillon, my chains and I get quite friendly." "Horrible!" cried Lady Constance, wringing her hands. "Oh, Lionel! Lionel! I can bear it no longer!"

At that name the dwarf lifted his head.

"Your lover, I suppose?"

"No; my wedded husband."

"My dear young lady, be calm; do not indulge in false hopes. You will never see him again. They will either get rid of him or you. The best thing he can do, in your interests, is to leave England at once. I might be able to communicate with him. Mind, I don't say it's possible, but there's a good-natured groom here called Joe who once took a note through my bars. Yes, and posted it. I will do my best for you. I wrote the note like Sir Walter Raleigh in the Tower—in blood on some fire-grate paper."

"You are an angel sent from Heaven for my deliverance. Yes, Lionel must appear to accept their bribes and depart. I see it all, and then they will release me later on. I may manage to slide them, and join him on a foreign shore. This hope alone is a divine nourishment to my soul."

The dwarf looked reflective.

"The worst of your charming sex is, they have a trick of betraying evidences of deep emotion on their faces. Now, you look radiant and exquisite, the colour re-visits your cheek; your body glows with expectation, already you fancy yourself in your husband's arms. Again, all this will not escape the doctor's eyes. He has the blood of the Creole in his veins, but if barbarous, he has the keen instinct of the savage. Do not, I beg of you, arouse his suspicions."

As he uttered these words, the heavy bars grated to and fro, a rattling sound was heard, and Dr. Moseley entered, but before he had time to turn the handle in the door, the dwarf rushed to the panel and disappeared.

Lady Constance remained in a motionless attitude as he approached her.

"I thought I heard voices," the doctor muttered, looking anxiously around.

"I have a trick of talking to myself," she said, on her guard. Then, rapidly: "Dr. Moseley, you know there is nothing the matter with my intellect or reason. I have no right to be imprisoned here. It is an infamous deed."

"Hush!" he answered, shaking his head. "This fallacy you cherish, alas, only proves your mind is seriously affected. You are the victim of delusion."

"I might as well argue with you to spare me as a lamb seeks to turn the butcher's knife when it is at its throat. I say I am resigned."

She looked so beautiful and pathetic in her suffering, her fair arms and neck glistened so seductively in the dim lamp-light, Dr. Moseley, reflecting on Tessa's swarthyness, felt a livelier interest in his lovely patient.

"You are strangely beautiful, Lady Constance," he said, with a half sigh; "with a complexion all lilies and roses."

He had well dined, and had done justice to some of the finest Chambertin London wine-merchants could procure.

Doctor Moseley, under these circumstances, was apt to be a little free in his conversation and manner. He liked festivity when it involved no outlay, and the frightful pallor of his patient afforded him an interesting study. His Creole nature readily received new impressions.

"What has my beauty, if I have any, to do with my grief?" she asked, sadly.

"Women may do worse than trust to their beauty when they seek the aid of men," he said, refilling his glass. He had brought some choice Maraschino with him, and sipped it at intervals.

"Now, my fair captive and friend, allow me to pour you out a little Maraschino. You are young. Youth's agony changes, dilates, increases, fades; violent and terrible we know, and you have been deranged, but you are now better, and will sleep none the worse (speaking professionally) for a little rare Maraschino."

She obeyed him mechanically: She had some

hope he might even yet spare her the doom of lengthened captivity.

"So you believe you have married a landscape gardener?" (Doctor Moseley had vague terrors the injured husband might soon set the police at work to regain his wife.) "What a singular hallucination. I suppose horticulture is your passion, and you adore the bright, dew-laden Flora, goddess of flowers?"

She was silent, feeling herself at his mercy. Her brows knitted at this moral vivisection. The doctor could extract no further syllable from her lips.

"You might do worse than trust me entirely," he said, half angrily, baulked in his curiosity.

"How much money will you take to let me leave here?" she said, impetuously.

"My beautiful damigella, this is not a question of guineas. I might do more towards your release were you to be kinder to me," and again he refilled his glass with Maraschino. "For instance I might remove these gloomy curtains and let you have daylight, and the agreeable society of my amiable wife and myself."

This, so far, was encouraging. Lady Constance was very anxious to have the curtains removed and inhale the pure, fresh air. That this man was a villain she doubted not, and yet if she could interest him in her sad history, why so much the better. He took her hand and felt her pulse with a professional shake of the head.

"Sadly too rapid; there is great wear and tear of the nervous system going on; this nervous exhaustion is most fatal. But in other respects your general health has improved. Now if I were to let you have a delicious entree for supper—our cook is an artist, *à la veau en papillotes*—what do you say?"

He held his head on one side and smiled, looking like a sociable vulture.

"Try macaroni," cried a voice at the door, and Tessa, disrobed and wearing a loose dressing-gown, entered. Lady Constance was very glad of the Italian's appearance on the scene. "Ah! my *Ubenzer*, we searched everywhere for you. Mr. Jennings has sent to say he feels faint, and requires some soda and brandy."

"Jennings is a dwarf," explained the doctor, "with a slight homicidal mania; he once tried to hang himself with four skipping-ropes from a hook in the arbour; he loved, not wisely, but too well—a widow, too, who, if mature was comely; she jilted Jennings. Take the keys, my Tessa, give him what is necessary, but deal gently with the brandy."

Whether Tessa's jealousy were aroused on finding the doctor tête-à-tête with the earl's daughter was not known, but she steadily refused to descend without her spouse.

"Continue with the medicine," said the doctor, heroically, as he resigned himself, and placed his flask of Maraschino in his pocket. "and we shall trace a rapid improvement in a few months. Remember I can have the advice of various medical colleagues if you are worse; the heart is sadly depressed," feeling the cardiac organ with renewed interest; and as they withdrew, Lady Constance heard a loud peal of laughter behind the panel, as if the ubiquitous Jennings had overheard their conversation.

Lady Constance began to think he was a grotesque being, fond of mingling the ghastly with the jocose, but he might find means to let her write to Lionel.

CHAPTER XVII.

ON THE TRACK.

Oh! from sleep
Most valiantly must my weary brain implore
Its long lost battery now.

BEREFT of his wife, Lionel lost no time in endeavouring to regain her and in seeking information as to her destination. He was terribly worn out with grief and care; sleep was a stranger to his eyelids, and his brain seemed corroded with anxiety. He communicated with various foreign authorities regarding the life and character of the wicked woman Meredith

who had planned his ruin; but she had departed the following day after his denunciation of her to the earl.

"You will be useful to me in the future," Lady Violet said to her on the eve of her departure. "I care little for your history or your antecedents; but I must warn you it will be safer to 'efface' yourself for a time from here. After a few months, if you like to return disguised, I may avail myself of your services."

Meredith, therefore, went to America and flourished amazingly well in San Francisco. Lionel, she knew, was her enemy, and until she could return to England in safety she preferred her banishment to danger.

So Lionel resolved to take up his quarters in London; but, as far as legal assistance went, he found he could do nothing.

The position of a girl who was under age and pronounced insane by competent judges, constituted a very complicated case; one, too, needing large sums of money to carry on. Lionel had few of those comfortable "golden boys" which oil the necessary legal wheels. The magistrate of the place was a personal and intimate friend of the earl, and coolly smiled at Lionel's story, as if the fact of an earl's daughter marrying a landscape gardener, even under the most romantic circumstances, was indeed the best proof of temporary derangement.

So Lionel found he must rely on himself alone. He had advertised in all the "agony" columns of various papers. He came up to London accompanied by Aphra, and the two sought on all sides the missing one. Search, indeed, seemed hopeless, and Lionel's brave heart began to break. "He had loved this girl with all the heroism and passion of a generous nature. He would have died for her—suffered any martyrdom to regain her—and yet they were parted, it seemed, for ever.

But one day as he mumbled restlessly down Oxford Street (in much the same frame of mind as De Quincey may have been in as he thought of his "poor lost Ann") gazing into the shops with saddened, tired eyes, a strange-looking boy, in a ragged coat, presented himself, and said, doffing his hat:

"Are you the gentelman wot advertised this in the 'Daily Detonator'?" and he took out a piece of soiled paper from his pocket.

Lionel seized it eagerly, wondering what this might lead to.

"Why, my lad? How can you know me?"

"Cos I seed you with a gipsy a walking down Bayswater way late one night, and I posted a letter for Joe—Joe's my mate—he's a pigeon-fancier, he is, and it was directed 'Lionel Hargrave, Esq.,' and I just read on your handkerchief, sir, which I make free to say I think some thief tried to get and didn't, 'Lionel Hargrave. We was also told to beware of letting any gipseys or loose fish of any kind into our gates after nightfall; and readin' about an earl's darter as was taken away, and implored to return to her loving husband, and postin' that ere note, I put two and two together, and I says, 'Lord! that's him,' and so made free to speak."

Lionel could hardly restrain his joy. Here at last was a clue, and deliverance might be at hand!

"Then what are you in the establishment?" he asked.

"I'm a 'elp, sir, taken on at odd times when we've more 'osses than usual. Oh, look, sir! that there lady a drivin' that fine pair of bays with black p'int, that's your lady's sister, Lady Violet Harrington, a going to make a morning call on the doctor."

"Give me his address," said Lionel, taking out a half-sovereign and giving it to the boy, who promised faithfully to divide it with Joe.

"It was a dwarf, sir, as wrote the note for your lady."

"Heaven bless him," said Lionel, taking out his pocket-book and scribbling down the address, and something else on another page, which he tore out and slipped in the boy's hand. "Run with this as fast as you can to Rosemary Street. I must get possession of the note sent

to my cottage. You will most likely see a gipsy sitting by the fire. If she is not there, wait for her, give her this slip of paper, and she will then hurry to my cottage. Thus will we baffle them."

The boy promised obedience, and set off at a run, testing the half-sovereign with his teeth, and blessing instead of reviling the various old apple-women he passed at their stalls.

Lady Violet, who was generally spoken of as one of the "best dressed" women in London, swept onward in a cloud of dust little imagining who was on the track. Lionel did not think it wise to try and effect an entrance into the doctor's house till Lady Violet had left. She was, he saw, not alone in the carriage, Sir Hugh Allerton was by her side to-day, and Lionel noticed how earnestly he appeared engaged in conversation. Sir Hugh, in fact, had fallen violently in love with the beautiful mocking woman, whose *jeux d'esprit* and flashing wit roused alike his astonishment and admiration. Sir Hugh was driving, and Lionel half envied him the careless ease of every gesture.

"By heaven! he is like me," the young man muttered, recalling Meredith's remarks, "and yet for me—no birthright, no wealth, no property, only sadness and a sense of failure," Lionel sighed.

Could that scornful voluptuary, that heartless sensualist, who once penned those flippant lines he had read on the piece of faded yellow paper he had found among poor Aphra's hoards, have been his father? and if so, still the cloud hung over him.

He was then only his illegitimate son. Had he not resolved to devote every energy in regaining his wife, Lionel would have been certain he had now found a clue to the mystery encircling his own career.

Yes; he was strangely like the elegant, languid man of fashion who was driving Lady Violet through Oxford Street. And was Sir Hugh another victim drawn in those meshes of sentiment from which is no escape? He resembled him enough to be his brother, which perhaps he was, but even then disgrace must cling to him.

Lionel felt excited, overwrought, a dangerous mood. He hailed a hansom and followed them; he saw Lady Violet's carriage stop at the corner of a new road; he witnessed her descend, and evidently indicate to Sir Hugh he was to drive about till she returned.

Lionel pointedly directed Sir Hugh's attention to himself. He told the hansom cabman to draw up to the kerb near where the spirited thoroughbreds were reined. He wanted to gaze into Sir Hugh Allerton's eyes and fathom every expression.

No lover ever looked into his mistress's orbs with keener interest. It was a weaker face than Lionel's and not so much tanned by exposure to the wind and weather, but there were the same delicate moulding of outline, figure and curve.

Sir Hugh threw himself back in the park phaeton and tossed the reins to the groom as he lit a cigar. Lionel was in that passionate, febrile state which produces recklessness. Sir Hugh started up, as if to resent the insolence of this stare, and then as a great writer says, "Every condition has its instincts," he too regarded Lionel with interest. He fancied he saw a reflection of himself, and then fell back again with a languid smile.

"I thought I recognised the Earl of Harrington's landscape gardener," he said. "Perhaps you are out of place. You want aw—a recommendation and that sort of thing?"

Lionel vibrated at the voice; it was so like his own when he was joyous and elate—a musical voice full of kindly sympathy. This white-handed young Englishman was a man to be relied on. Lionel looked at him again and turned dazedly pale.

"Pardon me, Sir Hugh, I want no character or recommendation. I only wished to regard you carefully."

"By Jove! Hargrave, are you mad?" That word brought back all the colour to his cheek. The blood rushed wildly to his heart.

Sir Hugh was evidently unaware of the younger daughter's marriage with himself.

"No," he answered, sadly, "for there is, alas, method in my madness. 'Do you know what it is to love a woman to distraction?'"

Sir Hugh looked hard at Lionel here. He noticed how heavy-eyed and weary he seemed—how much thinner he had become.

"I am not particularly addicted to extremes," he said, quietly. "We club-men soon lose faith, and very early, indeed, sometimes."

Sir Hugh felt interested in a mild sort of way. There was something in Lionel's tearless eyes that touched him in a singular degree.

"Ah! you're in trouble then, Hargrave?"

"I am."

"Can my purse assist you? I remember a conversation I once had with you at the Hall. You have evidently cultivated your mind. You are a man of sense and feeling. Don't hesitate to say if you're in need of the ready."

"A thousand thanks, Sir Hugh, for your kindness. You are talking to a man who has lost his wife."

Ah, thought Sir Hugh, here is a case of fidelity run mad. Some simple village matron has eloped with the baker, and the husband's going off his head in consequence. How many would be only too thankful to lose their "worse" halves under any conditions!

"Is she dead?"

"Worse than that, Sir Hugh Allerton."

"Forsaken you, perhaps," (evidently a case of desertion, thought the amiable baronet). Lionel shook his head. Sir Hugh sprang from the carriage and stood by his side.

"You interest me, 'pon honour. Remember the next best thing in the way of comforting yourself for the loss of a charming woman is to know she's not living with anyone else. Would you care to be my valet, for instance?"

There was something so curious in the idea to Lionel that his brother should engage him as servant, he almost laughed.

"I am not fit for that, Sir Hugh. I am always seeking one person."

"Your wife?"

Lionel nodded.

"It is so terrible to lose one you love. It must kill me but that I have the hope of saving her."

"Keep up your spirits, Hargrave, and don't neglect food. You're quite too thin."

"If one day I feel you could assist me, Sir Hugh, may I rely on your help?"

"You may. You recollect our conversation in the lower walk?"

"Perfectly. I said I rebelled against my destiny."

"Many do that. It only tightens the chains. Seek to conquer it; if things turn out wrong with me, I shall go abroad."

No more was said, as Lionel fancied he detected the sylph-like form of Lady Violet in the distance. He lifted his hat, and the polished, languid gentleman reached out his hand and grasped Lionel's—another instinct, perhaps. The next moment Lionel turned down an angle of the new road, and Lady Violet accosted Sir Hugh in a rather sharp tone of voice. She looked harassed.

Dr. Moseley had demanded an extortionate sum of money, or her sister would be restored to them. She was very anxious Sir Hugh should learn nothing of the matter.

"I thought I saw you talking to some man just now," she said, raising her eye-glass and scanning the new road.

"Yes, that fellow Hargrave. I fancied he wanted a character or situation, you know."

Lionel Hargrave, her sister's husband; her brother-in-law; hateful thought. Their enemy so near this spot where his wife was hidden. Lady Violet shuddered. How could he possibly have tracked her here? She half resolved to return at once and warn Dr. Moseley of their danger.

"You were talking to Hargrave. Was he particularly confiding or discursive?"

"My darling Vi, you are so tremendously

bitter and hard to poor humanity. You ought to pity the poor wretch."

"Why?" Lady Violet controlled herself admirably.

"He told me he had lost his wife. Some rustic maid, no doubt. The poor fellow seemed awfully cut up."

Lady Violet paled to the lips. Her voice was hoarse as she said:

"Then he did not confide her name to you?"

"He did not; he seemed like a man dazed and bewildered."

Lady Violet breathed as if relieved. So far nothing was known.

But Sir Hugh guessed something was wrong with darling Vi, for she declined to drive the thoroughbred home; handed him the reins, and remained in deep thought.

"When do you expect your sister to return?" he said, after a pause.

"I have heard she is seriously ill. You may have remarked my emotion. We have grave fears her life will not be spared."

"While there's life there's hope," he said, thoughtfully conscious of something strange and peculiar in her manner. He even began connecting Lionel Hargrave in some strange way with the absent Lady Constance.

Meanwhile, Lionel, taking out his silver watch, saw that it was just half-past twelve o'clock, and resolved to wend his way to Dr. Moseley's establishment. Could he but once gain access to the presence of his beloved Constance he would take her away by force. As Lady Violet's carriage swept onward in the distance he rang the bell at the lodge gate, and an aged dame appeared.

"You wish to see the doctor, sir?"

"Yes, at once, my business is urgent."

He then directed the cabman to wait at the corner of the road for him. The old woman disappeared, and returned with a message that Dr. Moseley was engaged. Lionel took out half-a-crown and placed it in her hand.

"Allow me to wait for him," he said, "I have come a long way to see him."

She pointed in the direction of the house.

"If you're pretty free with yer money to Barney Gudgeon, the butler, he'll mebbe let you wait in the hanti-room, sir."

Lionel, assuring himself of the possession of seven shillings and sixpence with which to seduce Gudgeon, walked leisurely to the hall door.

(To be Continued.)

FOR HUSBANDS.

Don't think when you have won a wife that you have also won a slave. Don't think that the woman you have promised to love, cherish and protect becomes your servant as her part of the contract.

Don't think that your wife has less feeling than your sweetheart. Her relationship only is changed, not her nature.

Don't think you can dispense with all the little civilities of life toward her on marrying. She appreciates those quite as much as other women.

Don't be gruff and rude at home. Had you been that sort of fellow before marriage, the probabilities are that you would be sewing on your own buttons still.

Don't make your wife feel that she is an encumbrance on you, by giving grudgingly. What she needs give cheerfully, as if it were a pleasure to do so. She will feel better and so will you.

Don't meddle in the affairs of the house under her charge. You have no more right to be poking your nose into the kitchen than she has to walk into your place of business and give directions to your employees.

Don't find fault with her extravagance in ribbons, etc., until you have shut down on cigars, tobacco, whiskey, etc.

Don't leave your wife at home to nurse the

children on the score of economy, while you bolt down town at night to see the show or spend a shilling on billiards.

Don't bolt your supper and hurry off to spend your evenings lounging around away from your wife.

Before marriage you couldn't spend evenings enough with her.

Don't think that board and clothes are a sufficient return for all that a wife does for you.

Don't expect your wife to love and honour you if you prove a brute, unworthy of love or honour.

Don't caress your wife in public, and snarl and growl at her in private. This proves you both a hypocrite and a dog.

Don't wonder that your wife is not as cheerful as she used to be, when she labours from early morn till late at night to pander to the comfort of a selfish being who has not soul enough to appreciate her.

HOUSEHOLD LOVE.

A little love goes very far
To smooth the daily care;
It gives a brightness to the earth,
A fragrance to the air;
A smile upon a loving face,
A word of kindness said,
The pressure of a gentle hand—
By this good work is sped.

But when a little love grows great,
And the once tiny stream
Into a glorious river spreads,
All life becomes a dream;
From neck and arms the burden falls,
We're glad and swift and strong;
We grasp our duty's hardest stroke,
And clench it with a song.

Then think, dear love, whom changeable
years,

Have changeless bound to me,
How in the daily round of toil,
My feet should buoyant be;
I cannot wish my work were less,
Your love could scarce be more;
Swift labour sings within our home,
And strong love keeps the door.

C. B.

SCIENCE.

THE SIZE OF THE BRAIN AND INTELLIGENCE.

At the recent Anthropological Congress in Paris, Dr. Lebon gave the results of his experimental researches on the variations of volume of the cranium in relation to intelligence. According to observations made on numerous series of crania it is proved that intelligence is in proportion to the volume of the cranium, the best endowed races, and among races the most intelligent individuals having the most voluminous cranium. By comparing these series of crania it is also found that the superior races present a much greater number of voluminous crania than the others.

The same phenomenon is presented in proportion to the degree of civilisation; the Parisian crania of the twelfth century present, for example, a less volume than the crania of modern Parisians; at the same time, the difference among individuals becomes more considerable. Dr. Lebon does not believe that height exercises any considerable influence on the volume of the cranium and the weight of the brain. Nevertheless, with equal height, the woman has a brain less heavy than the man. The author, from a study of seventeen male and seventeen female brains found between them a difference of 172 grammes to the advantage of the former.

It is worthy of remark that among the superior races the cranium of the woman is generally much less than among the inferior races. This is due, Dr. Lebon says, to the insignificant part taken by woman in the work of modern society. The comparative study of the curves of the circumference of the cranium, of that of the head, of the volume of weight and brain, shows the relations existing between these various values and renders possible the construction of tables which, one of them being known, permit the determination of the others of the series. It is seen, for example, that a head the circumference of which is 57 centimetres corresponds to a cranium the circumference of which is 52 centimetres, and the volume of 1,550 cubic centimetres. The probable weight of the brain contained in the cranium would be 1,350 grammes.

There is a constant inequality of development between the two halves of the brain, which is sometimes more developed on the right, sometimes on the left, without race or state of intelligence appearing to have any manifest influence on the direction of this inequality of development. The circumference of the cranium, on which depends the volume of the brain, has a close connection with the degree of intelligence. With the measurements of the circumference of the head, taken from more than 1,200 living subjects, Dr. Lebon has constructed a series of curves which show that from the point of view of their development the heads of modern Parisians and of the inhabitants of the country are classed in the following order:

1, Savants and learned men; 2, the Parisian bourgeoisie; 3, the old nobility; 4, Parisian domestic servants; 5, peasants. Dr. Broca, in remarking on Dr. Lebon's paper, said that if among the less civilised races the difference between the volume of the crania of men and women is relatively small, while it is great among civilised races, this does not prove the intellectual inferiority of women, but is explained by the necessity for savage women taking part in the struggle for existence under the same conditions as the men.

The planets Mercury and Venus have recently been visible as morning stars, and considerable attention has been attracted by their beautiful appearance in the eastern sky, though it has been necessary to rise early to see them. There has been some discussion as to the relative brightness of the two planets. Mr. Richard A. Proctor says the surface of Mercury is far inferior to that of Venus in light-reflecting power, or what Zollner calls whiteness. He thinks this difference may be accounted for by the assumption that the atmosphere of Venus is generally laden with clouds, while that of Mercury is rarer, having few clouds, whence it follows that there can be but little water on the surface of the latter planet. That this assumption is well-founded appears from the transit-of-Venus observations in 1874, and from the observations of the transit of Mercury in May last, especially those made by Professor C. A. Young, the American astronomer.

Mr. GEORGE H. DARWIN, a son of the famous naturalist, read a remarkable paper at the Dublin meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, tending to establish what he calls a modified edition of the nebular hypothesis. He considers the movements of the earth, supposing it to be viscous spheroid—that is to say, a body of its present shape, but made up of matter not perfectly fluid. The internal friction of such matter is termed viscosity—its tenacious, or sticky quality. By very long and complex analytical methods Mr. Darwin has reached the almost irresistible conclusion that if the moon and earth were ever molten, viscous bodies, they once formed parts of a common mass. He speaks of "Asaph Hall's wonderful discovery of the Martian Satellites" as confirmatory of the general results stated in his paper.



[THEY MEET AGAIN.]

STRONG TEMPTATION: A Tale of Two Sinners.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"That Young Person," "Why She Forsook
Him," &c., &c.

CHAPTER I.

MOTHER AND CHILD.

Even the heart which throbbeth next our own
knows but half our sadness.

A DREARY November afternoon, when the sky was of a dull leaden grey, and the rain came down in torrents; when the clouds seemed one vast reservoir from which the plug had suddenly been removed; a day when nothing bright or happy met the eye, and Mark Tapley himself would have found it hard enough to be cheerful. On this day, I say, the first dawning came to Dora Yorke of what was to be her fate.

Dora, otherwise Dorothea Elena Yorke, heroine of this story, and one of the two sinners of whom we have to tell, was passing through the seven years said to be the happiest in woman's life—that is, she was between eighteen and twenty-five, an English girl of good birth and slender fortune, with a great soul full of restless longings after something beyond her petty daily cares.

In a word, one who must be good of 'bad—for whom there was no middle course. Through all her life the evil and good must war within her. She was meant for a saint or a sinner.

On this gloomy November afternoon she sat with her mother in their dingy parlour, which Mrs. Grubb, of No. —, Coldharbour Lane, let to them, with the bedroom adjoining, for the 'modest' rental of fifteen shillings weekly.

Mother and daughter, and no love to unite them, alone in the world save for each other, living together in two small rooms, yet miles asunder in sentiment and feeling.

Mrs. Yorke was a little, fair woman of forty, who had been a pretty wax doll when her husband married her some twenty-three years before, and fondly imagined time had made no difference in her charms.

Everything about Mrs. Yorke was petty. She would have walked a mile to save a half-penny, and spent her last shilling on a flower for her bonnet.

She had never forgiven her husband for dying and leaving her a widow when caps were so unbecoming, and the fact that Dora was tall and looked her full age, thus causing awkward reflections on Mrs. Yorke's own years, was her greatest offence to her mother.

Mrs. Yorke sat by the fire making paper mats. Dora was by the window, doing nothing, one hand supporting her stately head, her eyes bent on the dreary prospect without, and her thoughts far away.

"Dora, the fire wants stirring."

Mrs. Yorke was certainly nearer the grate than Dora, but it never occurred to her to exert herself. The daughter rose slowly, poked the fire vigorously, shovelled on coals as plentifully as though they had not been charged for at the rate of sixpence a scuttle, and then returned to her post.

"Dora!"

"Yes, mother."

"There, now, how often I ask you not to call me mother. Considering the little difference in our ages, mamma is much more suitable."

"Well, what is it, mamma?"

"I want you to talk to me. I feel so dull."

"Who could be anything else in these pokey rooms?"

"Well, my dear," retorted Mrs. Yorke, who thought this a disparagement to her own power of managing, "you couldn't get any better for the price; a hundred and twenty pounds a year isn't much to keep two people with."

"No, but it would be quite sufficient for one."
"Yes."

Mrs. Yorke admitted the fact calmly; she never forgot that the income was hers, not Dora's. She did not exactly grudge her child's support, but she did like to remind Dora that it was so much taken from her own comforts.

"Don't you think, mother, we should be far happier apart—you and I?"

This point-blank question struck poor Mrs. Yorke, as she afterwards said, "All of a heap."

Little as she cared for Dora, she had never been separated from her. When the husband and father was taken three years before one or two friends had urged Dora to go out as a governess. The girl at once refused.

"My mother could never live alone. She must have someone to talk to," and so the subject dropped.

"You would be much better off, mamma," went on Dora, much as one puts persuasions before a child. "Why, you would be able to have the drawing-room floor, and that subscription to the library you wanted so much."

"I should not like you to do anything rash," remarked the widow, who had brightened up wonderfully at her daughter's speech.

"I will never do anything that can bring trouble on you."

"It is very respectable being a governess," observed Mrs. Yorke, who, having had a very scanty education herself, could hardly appreciate the position of those who could impart a liberal one. The "young lady" whose pupil Dolly Green had been at a shilling a week was doubtless very respectable indeed.

"Very respectable," agreed Dorothea, who had no idea of teaching the young idea how to shoot.

"I could say you were away on a visit, you know, if anyone asked, and you could always come home for the holidays."

"I should never have any holidays, I fancy, mother."

"Nonsense, you'd have to stand on your rights and not be trampled on. Yes, I think it

an excellent plan, I only wonder you did not see about it before."

This was hard when consideration for her alone had kept her daughter in those dreary lodgings these three years.

"I will see about it now, mamma. Are you quite sure you like it?"

The girl looked wistfully at the woman, who had given her nothing in the world but life. She longed for one word of tenderness, one look of love, alas, in vain.

"Why of course I like it, Dora," retorted Mrs. Yorke. "The drawing-room is a much pleasanter room than this one, and if I could get plenty of novels I should never feel dull."

"You shall have them, mother." And the girl got up and left the room. She dressed herself in her walking things very quickly, almost as though she feared her courage might give way. She did not return to the parlour to speak to her mother, but went out into the driving rain.

Dora Yorke had not always stood thus alone. Her father, a lieutenant in the army, who, poor, hopeful soul, was always looking for promotion and died when it was surely coming, had made her his companion and friend. Married in extreme youth to a woman beneath him in every respect, the lieutenant had clung to his only child with a devoted love. She was christened Dorothea after his mother, and for a long time he hoped she might draw him nearer to the proud parents who had cast him off on his marriage. In vain, they were never reconciled to their younger son; and Dora never heard a syllable of her grand relations. She was all in all to her father; for her sake he bore the burden of life bravely, and she was his one regret, when he died almost suddenly, and thus laid down the existence which had been one long failure.

It was an awful blow to Dora. Her father, beside all his qualities of head and heart, was a gentleman, and though poor, was treated as such. Under his care his daughter associated with her equals, and took her full share in such regimental gaieties as might be on foot. The lieutenant dead, and his widow gone to the dingy London lodgings, because there her income would go farthest, and she should sometimes see the shops, her daughter dropped utterly out of her own sphere. Released from the control of her husband, Mrs. Yorke went back to the follies and failings of her youth. Anyone who asked her to tea or supper was her friend. And bitterly did she reproach Dora for refusing to accept the hospitality of a rising dress-maker.

"Poor and proud," she said, disdainfully. "What's to become of you? You're just like your father."

"I hope I am," said the daughter, simply.

And indeed she was. The lieutenant had been a remarkably handsome man, and his daughter entirely resembled him. There was no trace of her mother in Dora. She was of the middle height, yet looked tall from her slender figure and graceful carriage; her features were perfect in their regularity, and very clearly cut; her thick, soft wavy hair was drawn loosely back from her forehead, and coiled round her head; her large, dark eyes, which could reflect in their limpid depths any sentiment from passion to despair, and a wondrous, yearning, wistful expression at the corners of her mouth, redeemed her face from being too statuesque.

She was a beauty, but with a beauty it required taste to appreciate; her mother often lamented she should have had such a dark, plain child, and Mrs. Yorke's recent "friends" certainly endorsed this opinion, yet in the society she had frequented with her father Dorothea had had many admirers.

At the regimental balls men vied with each other who should be her partner, and one had asked her hand for a longer companionship than that demanded by waltz or quadrille. Dora had not looked statuesque then, she had been a loving living beauty; she had not said her young lover nay. He was to come to Lieutenant Yorke to confirm his happiness.

It was never so confirmed; the next day Dora's father was sick unto death; the following the girl heard that Vere Eastcourt had gone home on leave. He returned three weeks later merely to complete the arrangements for leaving the service. Lieutenant Yorke was in the churchyard then, but Vere never called to sympathise with the widow and orphan; apparently he had won the fresh young heart for the plaything of an hour, and already repented his error. There was nothing to be done; pride, delicacy, maidenly reserve forbade her writing to ask for an explanation of his conduct; there were no letters or presents to return; their happiness had been too short for such things. Dora took to London no memory of Vere but an aching heart, no news ever came to her of Mr. Eastcourt. She grew grave and cold, and and hopeless, yet she persuaded herself that her love was a thing of the past, and she had forgotten him.

Alas! when a man has come to be thought of as "he" and "him" it is no easy matter to tear his image from our heart, but Dora quite believed she had succeeded.

Dora Yorke, with her shabby umbrella, did not walk far that wet afternoon we know of. She entered a stationer's on Camberwell Green. A good many customers were in the shop, and she had to wait her turn. Sitting down she took a paper and pencil from her pocket and wrote a few lines rapidly. Then as rapidly made one or two alterations. By this time the shopman was at liberty.

"I want this advertisement inserted in the 'Daily Telegraph,' please."

The man read it carefully over, stared at the girl a little impudently, and said with a smile of familiarity:

"Five shillings, please."

Her little purse was empty when Dora returned home.

CHAPTER II.

THE TEMPTATION DAWNS.

Most necessary 'tis that we forget.

HAMLET.

BRYAN HASTINGS was a gentleman of forty, who followed but two aims—to make money as fast as he could and to have precisely his own way.

Fairly started in life's struggles by an indulgent father, and possessing plenty of ability and perseverance, he soon gained his first aim, and that helped him largely to obtain his second. He liked pleasure, society, and amusement. His money could purchase all these. His father died soon after he began his successful career as a banker. Thus free from domestic ties, possessing a handsome appearance, good taste, cultivated manners, and a liberal education, people not only tolerated him, they courted him. It was whispered in Blankshire circles that Mr. Hastings had only to choose his bride, no parent would be so foolish as to refuse his daughter to the London banker.

Bryan had a very pretty place in Blankshire called the Lodge, but the chief part of his time he spent at his chambers in London, and nearly every day he visited the great building where his wealth had been made and more was making.

Now it is very much easier for a rich man of education and polish to conceal his selfishness than for a poor clerk or a monied ignoramus. Bryan had too much tact to weary people with himself. He could talk on most subjects; did not interlard his conversation too much with "I" and "me." He was eminently respectable, went to church, and paid his debts, ate his neighbours' dinners, and welcomed them in return. It never occurred to society, which said so much in his favour, to observe one striking deficiency in his organisation. He had no heart, from boy to man self-interest had been his motto. He had never really cared for anyone but himself. No one was intimate enough to discover this. With acquaintances, polite-

ness, intellect and tact are quite sufficient to hide the want of heart.

Once, when he was much younger and had not made nearly so much money, he had been privately engaged to be married. For twelve months, with the consent of the young lady's parents, the connection lasted, then it was abruptly broken; the girl had read him too truly. She was warm and impulsive, and told him she would as soon have married a statue, and her father told him Mrs. Bryan Hastings would be little better than a slave. Bryan shrugged his shoulders, and accepted his congé; a wife with so much romance would have been a great inconvenience, and he objected to such an interfering father-in-law. His pride was wounded a little; his feelings not at all. He did not even sigh when he read in the paper about two years afterwards that Lucy Clive had married a baronet.

His engagement occurred before he grew a big man, and his actions not so much noticed, so no one knew about it. Blankshire generally believed he had never been in love, which indeed he never had. He quite intended to marry some day, to have an heir to the fortune he had heaped up, but he was in no hurry; the qualifications he desired in a wife were many. She must be beautiful, to please his eye; intelligent to gratify his literary tastes; gently born to reign gracefully over his home; not troubled by any near relations; and above all things, poor enough to be submissive.

Once when staying with a military friend he attended an entertainment known as a bread and butter ball, which took place in the afternoon, and he saw there a girl whom he decided would make a beautiful woman. "He was introduced to her; waltzed with her, and forgot her, but for subsequent events the incident would never have been recalled. Three years after, whilst attending a noted ritualistic church in Walworth, he saw the face again, and at once remembered meeting with its owner. The promise of spring time was amply fulfilled; the girl had become a glorious woman, but Bryan's quick eye noticed a great change; the bright, regimental belle had a sad, weary look; her dress was poor and plainly made; evidently life did not go too easily with her. Half in curiosity Bryan hurried out of church at the conclusion of the service and waited at the women's entrance until she who was his ideal of beauty came out. To his surprise she was quite alone.

"Miss Yorke!"

Dora started; she recognised him at once. It seemed like a breath of the old life come back to look at his faultless attire and fashionable air. He spoke at once of his pleasure at meeting her; made some graceful allusion to her loss; still deplored though now no longer recent, and asked to see her home.

It was a characteristic of Dora Yorke that she had no false pride; it never occurred to her to hide from him that she was poor and lived as poor people do. She saw his surprise when they reached the dingy house in Coldharbour Lane.

"And you live here, Miss Yorke?"

"Yes, we have apartments here. Mother and I."

He shook hands with her; took off his hat, and walked away. Dora was not surprised when she met him at St. Paul's on the following Sunday and the next. She grew in time to expect him. She next said a word to her mother of these meetings. Slowly the idea dawned on her that Mr. Hastings was in love with her.

Never once did she think of falling in love with him. Dora had no heart for any man. Women such as she cannot give their love and take it away, and all of Dora's had been poured out on Vere Eastcourt. She thought Mr. Hastings very good; very kind; a man she would respect and look up to. As the time went on she knew quite well he meant to ask her to marry him.

It was her one chance of escape from the life which tortured her—her one hope of seeing more of the world than lay within a walking radius of Coldharbour Lane. Her intellect was starving

for want of food, her heart aching for love and sympathy.

She was sick with despair, weary with grief for Vere's loss, yet thinking all the time she had forgotten him. Judge her mercifully, for the temptation was strong.

It was not marrying simply for money, remember that, it was marrying for a home, for love, companionship, all that women prize. If Dora had not honestly respected and esteemed Bryan Hastings, and meant faithfully to bury her dead past, and make him a true, loyal wife, she would never have led him to propose to her.

He did propose to her one dull winter's evening returning from St. Paul's. Dora was not surprised, she had quite expected him to speak. He told her that he admired her more than any woman he had ever met, that he was sure their tastes were in perfect harmony, and he thought their union might be a happiness to them both. Dorothea felt half conscious that there was little warmth in his words, and something wanting in his wooing.

She contrasted his slow, measured phrases with the passionate affection Vere had poured out on her when he held her in his arms and whispered that she was more to him than all the world, but then the difference might be in herself.

Vere had been faithless. Mr. Hastings at least was sincere and thoroughly disinterested. Every word Vere had spoken awoke an echo in her own heart, now that heart seemed turned to stone. For a moment she could not answer Bryan, and he thinking she was overcome by his generosity, went on encouragingly:

"I can confide my name and honour to your keeping in perfect trust. I have but one wish to urge, it is wiser perhaps for me to mention it now."

"Yes, I should like to hear it, please."
"You must be all my own. I cannot share you even with your mother. Of course, I don't want you to be undivided. I shall hope you will go and see her whenever you are in town, only I could not offer her a home at the Lodge."

To be rich and leave her mother in poverty seemed despicable to Dora. She had never expected Mr. Hastings would receive Mrs. Yorke as a permanent inmate, but from his tone she knew now he meant the mother was to be a stranger in her daughter's home.

"I am all she has," timidly.
"I know," her lack of kindred was really a great attraction to him. "I know, of course, Mrs. Yorke would miss you and all that, but then mothers expect to give up their daughters."

"Mr. Hastings," said Dora, simply, "you have made me a very generous offer, and I thank you for it, but I could not leave my mother so entirely as you wish."

"I am sorry for it."
Perfect silence till they reached Coldharbour Lane, then suddenly:

"Miss Yorke, you must think over my proposal calmly. Don't decide in a hurry, it may be on reflection you will accede to my wishes."

"Shall I write to you?"

"I have no idea where I shall be next week. I may have to go to Paris. Don't write, advertise; it will be safer."

"Advertise?"

"Yes, in the 'Daily Telegraph'; just a line to say if you shall be at St. Paul's on Sunday evening. If so I will meet you and conclude all is to be as I wish."

"Good-bye."

They shook hands. There was no lingering pressure; no tender clasp; it was the most prosaic leavetaking possible.

On Monday Dorothea's mind was one mass of conflicting thoughts. One thing she decided, she must look for no advice from her mother.

Mrs. Yorke, in her delight to secure a wealthy husband for her child, would have promised anything, but when the wedding was over, forgetting her pledges, would probably have invited herself at once on a three months' visit. Dora knew well that for her to be happy in

wedded life her mother must not live under the same roof. Mrs. Yorke would yield to no one; she must be first, and this she could never be in a son-in-law's house. The bond of mother and daughter was so slight between these two that it would have cost Dora little to sever it, only she felt ashamed to go to wealth and leave her mother in poverty, and she could never forget that her father had loved her mother once. Sad though it seems, Mrs. Yorke's strongest hold on her child was that she was her husband's widow.

To find out indirectly the widow's own opinion on the subject, was Dora's next idea. We have seen how she succeeded. Mrs. Yorke esteemed herself richer with a hundred and twenty pounds a year and childless than with the same income and an only daughter. So Dora went out and sent her answer.

For the honour of English mothers, I hope and pray that few could thus have driven a daughter into strong temptation.

CHAPTER III.

A PARISIAN BOARDING-HOUSE.

No scene of life but has contributed
Much to remember. ROGERS.

MADAME HOFFMAN had a very fashionable English boarding-house at Paris in the Faubourg St. Honoré. Probably if any of you visit the gay French capital, you would still find the genial widow plying her thriving trade, but the period of which we write was the year one thousand eight hundred and seventy-three. There was no great exhibition then to attract visitors, and Paris generally still suffered from the effects of the late war, and Madame Hoffman's house was far from crowded.

Among the ladies staying there—or perhaps we should say residing there, as in two years they had only left it for as many months, and it was certainly their nearest approach to a home—were a widow and her two daughters, Mrs. Stuart, Miss Stuart and Miss Rosamond. They were lodged on the fifth floor, and given the end seats at the long dining-table. Mrs. Stuart did an infinity of fine needlework for Mrs. Hoffman, Evelyn played dreamy sonatas, and sang charming ballads whenever there were any musical people at the chateau, and Rosamond's gay chatter filled up the pauses which will occur when all kinds of individual strangers to each other attempt to meet on equal grounds.

From this you will gather that the Stuarts, though bearing a royal name, possessed a strictly limited income. These well-bred, well-born women were allowed to form part of Madame Hoffman's household, to which they were really a credit, on condition that each should turn her special talent to account for the good of the establishment.

The strange compact was well fulfilled. Madame Hoffman treated the Stuarts as ladies, and never exposed the peculiar arrangement to the other guests, and when the widow's small payments were in arrears she made no bitter speeches, and lastly she was quite willing the girls should have their chance with any marriageable men who came to the house.

On the other hand, in Madame's busy life, it was an immense relief to have a stylish self-possessed woman to chaperone the young girls sometimes sent to the chateau, to talk scandal to the dowagers and play whist with the old men, and it certainly was to the interests of the Chateau Thierry to have two very pretty girls, one a brilliant musician, the other an agreeable chatter-box, to relieve the monotony of evenings indoors.

Very few foreigners came to the Chateau Thierry, it was the stronghold of English and Americans, therefore British habits prevailed. Nine o'clock breakfast, an elaborate lunch at one, an elegant dinner at seven. Madame's visitors liked English comforts, and they had them. One foreign custom alone had been adopted, no one ever resorted to the drawing-room before lunch. Such of the boarders who

were within doors always retreated to their own apartments directly after breakfast.

One morning early in December the Stuart family were assembled in the mother's bedroom. Certainly there was no stove in the girls' room, but even if there had been they would never have thought of a second fire at the extravagant price of wood. Evelyn and Rosamond were on each corner of the hearth, and their mother, with an ominously small heap of gold and silver, sat between them. They were holding a great council of war; it was full six weeks to the time of dividends, and funds were at a low ebb.

"I must have a new dress," pronounced Rosamond, "I am perfectly shabby."

"And I want some music," declared Evelyn. "How am I to amuse people if I never have anything fresher than that old book of mother's?"

"And madame's bill isn't paid yet," replied the mother.

The proprietress of Chateau Thierry was English, but she was always spoken of as madame. People thought to use that title betrayed such a profound knowledge of French.

"How much is it?" asked Evelyn, the elder of the sisters.

"Twelve pounds,"
"It's too much," commented Rosamond; "the soup's always cold when it gets to me, and the grapes all gone before Joseph thinks of handing them to me."

"Besides, I don't believe madame would ever let these rooms if she got rid of us. Think of the breath we waste in mounting five flights of stairs." This from Evelyn.

"It engenders carefulness," said the sister. "We never forget anything. We really ought to recommend these rooms to persons wishing to improve their memory."

"My dear children," interposed their mother, "we are really fortunate. We live well, and move in good society for a hundred and forty-four pounds a year; it's wonderful."

"You forget my music, mother."

"And my conversational powers."
"My dear girls," went on the widow, who was the most good-tempered creature, and would have spent a fortune liberally provided only she had it to spend, "all this won't help me to pay a bill of twelve pounds when I have not quite ten."

"Awkward arithmetical puzzle."
"We must go without the things," sighed Rosamond.

"Oh, how hard it is to be shabby. Well, next month being New Year's Day, surely someone will give us something then, and—"

This hopeful reflection was interrupted by a knock at the door, and the lowest member of madame's kitchen, whose special business it was to attend on the fifth floor, acquainted Miss Rosamond, who sat next to the door, with the fact that madame herself wished to speak with her mother if quite convenient. Marie having taken breath and delivered her message, retreated.

Dead silence on the part of the three impecunious women. Gallant offer from Evelyn who, while Rosamond was her mother's favourite, yet loved that mother best.

"Shall I go to her?"

"No, my dear," answered Mrs. Stuart, drawing a warm shawl round her, and getting up reluctantly—the corridors were cold and her dress was thin—"I'd better go myself."

"Madame will be very sorry, but she is worried to death and has not a son, though the Despard's paid her fifty pounds when they went away," sneered Rose.

Madame Hoffman, to give her the title her soul delighted in, was in her own room, a luxurious apartment on the first floor which she never resigned to friend or foe. Seated by an enormous fire, she was warming her feet very much at her ease, and surveying two delicious cups of real French coffee, rich with cream, and giving forth a most fragrant odour.

Madame rose to receive Mrs. Stuart, thanked her for being so prompt, handed her one of the steaming cups of coffee, and produced a basket

of fancy cakes. Mrs. Stuart wondered what was going to happen.

"I'm afraid I'm not quite ready, madame," began the poorer woman, with a feeble smile; "you see I had the doctor in the autumn for Rose, and—"

"My dear friend, don't speak of it," interrupted the other. "I sent for you to ask you a favour."

Mrs. Stuart resigned herself to the full enjoyment of her coffee and cake, for the refreshment partaken of in madame's bedroom was of the first order.

"The fact is, Mrs. Stuart, I have a young lady coming here to-morrow."

"Second floor?" asked Mrs. Stuart, respectfully. Every descent from the attics was a rise in social standing.

"First—she will have this for her bedroom, and the little salon as a boudoir."

Mrs. Stuart gasped in surprise at the honours to be heaped on the newcomer.

"It's someone very rich, I suppose, madame?"

"It's a friend of yours," coolly replied the other.

"A friend of mine?" aghast.

"Yes; the favour I have to ask of you is that you will circulate the news at dinner to-day, that Miss Yorke, a friend of yours, arrives to-morrow."

"But, madame?"

"Nothing easier; you knew her father years ago, he's dead now, and his daughter is coming to Château Thierry that you may help her to select her trousseau. She is to be married on the second of January to an English banker—a man who rolls in money, who could write a cheque for thousands without feeling it."

"Lucky girl," a little enviously; she had marriageable daughters herself.

Madame Hoffman looked unutterably wise.

"I have known Mr. Hastings for some years; nothing could be more generous than his sentiments. His future wife is an orphan and absolutely penniless. She must have a trousseau and be properly chaperoned while she gets it. She can't come here as a stranger, people would talk. I can't introduce her as a friend of mine, or I couldn't take her money. Mr. Hastings is royal in his liberality, and if you will play the part of friend to his bride, dear Mrs. Stuart, I'll receipt that little affair at once, and think you very kind if you'll persuade the young ladies to accept a pretty dress from me for Christmas; they must choose it themselves," and madame pressed a white envelope into her friend's hand.

(To be Continued.)

DEDICATING THE BELLS OF ST. PAUL'S.

As the Bishop of London has explained in a letter to "The Times," it would be a misnomer to call the service which took place in the belfry of St. Paul's Cathedral on Friday last "the blessing of the bells." "The bells themselves," says his lordship, "were not blessed. The service was of the same character with those in common use at the laying the first stone of churches, schools, and mission rooms, and indeed, at the consecration of churches and churchyards; and with that familiar 'grace before meals' which most of us have heard repeatedly from our youth, and which I trust to hear at times as long as I live—'Bless, O Lord, these Thy gifts to our use, and us to Thy service.' In all these cases the blessing asked is not on the material objects, but on the persons for whose use or advantage they are provided. If such prayers are superstitious, I gladly plead guilty to superstition."

At the ordinary afternoon service in the Cathedral, which was attended by an immense congregation, the preacher, the Rev. J. V. Povah, discoursed on the duty of praise, and remarked on the circumstance that Wren's bell-tower had waited two hundred years for its occupants, which would henceforth peal forth

to summon worshippers, to celebrate the great festivities of the Church, to ring the old year out and the new year in, and to announce royal accessions, marriages, and births. At the conclusion of this service a procession was formed in the body of the Cathedral, and proceeded thence to the belfry tower.

During the short dedicatory service the choir sang the "De Profundis," "Deus misereatur," "Afferte Domino," and "Laudate Dominum." The Lord's Prayer was recited by Dean Church, and the Bishop then said a number of special collects, in one of which reference was made to the silver trumpets which Moses ordered to be sounded at the time of sacrifice. The well-known hymn from "Hymns Ancient and Modern," "When morning gilds the skies," was then sung, with which the Bishop of London rang the first bell, the sound of which was immediately taken up by the ringers, members of the "Ancient Society of College Youths," all practical ringers, and, by the way, men well advanced in years, who stood in their shirt-sleeves upon boxes fixed to the floor, each man having one foot in a stout leathern loop secured to the box. There was no vibration of the masonry, and the unanimous opinion as to the tone of the bells was one of complete approval.

A dense crowd had been waiting outside the Cathedral for three or four hours, and remained for some time listening to the music from the tower, but it gradually thinned, and had almost entirely dispersed before the ringers ceased from their labours, which they did not do until a thousand changes of "Stedman's Cinques" had been exceeded. It was remarkable that though the clash was very great on the ground immediately underneath, the sound in the middle of Ludgate Hill was quite muffled by the passing traffic, and at the beginning of Fleet Street was almost wholly inaudible. Yet along the Embankment, as far as the Cleopatra's Needle, the peals were far more distinct even than in the immediate neighbourhood of the Cathedral.

The bells are not connected with the clock, so that the hours and quarters will not be struck by them, and a carillon is still wanting; but they will be chimed by hand before each daily service, and upon the usual festive occasions. Their combined weight is thirteen tons, and they have cost £3,500.

THE SURVIVORS;

OR,

John Grindem's Nephew.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE hour was considerably past noon, and Detective Copps sat in his office a monumental picture of despair.

His efforts to get hold of his grand prize had been useless.

He himself had been twice or three times to the house in which Captain Tobias and the lovers had taken up their quarters. He had sent several emissaries, with several different stories and pretences, all of which had for object to inveigle Captain Tobias into some dark and convenient corner where he could have been seized—gagged or chloroformed, if necessary—and carried off to the "Speedwell" by due agency of hack and boat.

This was, of course, merely the first step in the nefarious programme.

But, Captain Tobias once out of the way, it seemed perfectly probable that Albert and Helen could also be secured by some similar lying process, and placed at the disposal of the scheming and revengeful Grindem.

For nearly twenty-four hours Mr. Copps had been running and riding to and fro as restlessly as a hungry wolf to make his little combinations

successful, and yet in all this time he had not been blessed with the smallest result.

"It beats the very deuce!" he ejaculated, springing to his feet, and walking swiftly back and forth in his room. "I never saw such a wary old fox as that Captain Tobias. As to the young man and the girl, I haven't even been able to get speech with them. I may as well go and report to Grindem that the whole thing is a failure, so far as any quiet seizure is concerned, and that we will have to be content with slower and more elaborate measures."

He bustled about his room and prepared himself for another walk.

Yet he halted again, in an attitude that was singularly pinched and anxious.

"After all—to lose that ten thousand," he gasped—"the very thought is horrible! The sum is not only large, but even half of it would enable me to go abroad and avoid coming troubles. Ah!"

Mr. Copps suddenly blanched to the hue of snow.

A thought had struck him with the instantaneous effect of lightning.

"Why not?" he ejaculated, responding to a mental inquiry. "The said Tobias has just hived fifty thousand pounds. No doubt he hates Grindem like poison. Ten to one he will accept my proposition. I'll see him instantly, if I have to swear out a warrant for antediluvianism in order to gain admittance to his presence."

He sleeked himself before the glass, secured a brace of pistols in his side pockets, took a liberal drink of brandy from a private bottle, and then slipped away rapidly in the direction of the triple objects of his covetousness. Twenty minutes later he sat face to face with Captain William Tobias.

"Upon my word, sir!" ejaculated the detective, mopping his face energetically, "I have had all the trouble in the world to see you! You seem to be hedged about like—like his most Satanic majesty, if I do not err in my quotation."

"Do I?" returned the old navigator, as he drew a carte of Copps from his pocket, and compared it with its living original. "That's natural enough. In keeping so very retired, and in taking so many precautions, I am merely obeying the directions and advice of Detective Mopps."

Copps again grew white.

Mopps was a rival detective and the very especial incubus, affliction and disgust of Mr. Copps.

"What? Mopps is in your employ, Captain Tobias?" shrieked the visitor.

The old navigator nodded quietly.

"Yes, I hired Mopps when I first came here," explained Captain Tobias, with a smile. "The business of Mopps has been to keep at a distance all such men as you, Mr. Copps, and also nullify, upset, and smash all the little jobs you and your sort might choose to put up. You will see that Mopps has furnished me with your picture," and he exhibited the article, "and has given me especial injunction to beware of you and all your works!"

The detective sat speechless.

"You can now understand, therefore, Mr. Copps," added the old navigator, "why all your desperate efforts to get hold of me during the last twenty-four hours have been such lamentable failures. Mopps has had his eye upon you!"

Just then Mopps came out of a back room, bowing to his astonished confrère, and looking smilingly around.

"I'm sold, I see, Dick," said Copps, offering his hand to his rival, "but I'll also sell Grindem. Sit down, Mopps, and I'll tell you the whole story."

Within five minutes more Captain Tobias and his detective were in complete possession of all the salient features of the machinations of Grindem.

"You see now, gentlemen, just how the case stands," summarised Copps. "Grindem has purchased the brig 'Speedwell,' and has her lying in the stream at this moment, all ready for departure."

"He's not only going out to the Pacific to rescue his son, who has been cast away upon Cocos Island, but he also proposes to turn the long voyage to account financially. Now, Grindem is so fond of Captain Tobias and the young people, that he has offered me ten thousand pounds to place them aboard of the 'Speedwell' under any pretence whatever, in the course of the coming evening. And this, Captain Tobias, is all that ails me."

"I see," said the captain, thoughtfully. "And your progress in the good work having been slow to-day, you have naturally come to me to make me some sort of proposal. Suppose you tell me at once, Mr. Copps, the precise object of your visit?"

"I came here to say, sir," replied the detective, "that if you will assist me in any way to earn that ten thousand pounds, I will share the money equally with you. That is to say, you shall have five thousand, Captain Tobias, and I will pocket the balance!"

The eyes of the old navigator twinkled. "That would be an awful job on Grindem!" he commented. "But it seems to me that Grindem deserves such a reverse, and that there can be no great difficulty in bringing it about."

Captain Tobias reflected a few moments, and then resumed:

"Curiously enough, I also have been preparing for a trading voyage to the Pacific. The principal object of the proposed voyage is, of course, to give me change and movement and recreation after my long imprisonment at Cocos Island. My young friend, Mr. Albert Graham, has paid so much attention to navigation during his two long voyages that he is in every way qualified to take command of the brig, and I have accordingly concluded to place him in that position."

"Ah! you have already purchased a brig for the voyage, then?" cried Copps.

"Yes, sir, as was natural, the number of brigs for sale at this time happening to be especially numerous. Brigs are a very useful class of vessels, you know. Indeed, my brig is almost identical in size and appearance with the 'Speedwell.'"

"Indeed?" ejaculated Copps. "The fact gives me a suggestion. Do you know what Grindem has been about to-day, Captain Tobias?"

"Getting ready for a final flight from the country, I think Mopps told me."

"Exactly, sir. The truth is, that account of your adventures at Cocos, and of Grindem's share in your great misfortunes, has completely paralysed the old rascal. He has been as a dead man, so far as character or standing is concerned, ever since that broadside struck him. He was quick to see that emigration was necessary, and—my little suggestion is getting bigger and bigger. Shall I talk to you with perfect freedom?"

"Of course," assured the two hearers in chorus.

Copps cleared his throat and resumed: "The departure of Grindem is intended to be secret, for the reason that he proposes to leave behind him notes and other outstanding obligations to the amount of several hundred pounds."

"That's Grindem, of course," commented Captain Tobias. "But it's an ordinary proceeding of an ordinary swindler, and as such is liable to a very ordinary interruption. For instance, if one of the banks or other creditors of Grindem should learn of his intended flight, they can put a deputy sheriff in charge of the 'Speedwell' by a simple course of legal procedure, so that she would not speed a yard for some time to come."

"That's so," confirmed Copps. "It would be a case in which to issue an attachment on the part of the creditors. If we choose, therefore, we can turn the tables upon Grindem to the extent of putting an embargo upon his departure."

"Capital!" cried Mopps. "I see just how we can proceed in the business. Mr. Copps can make delivery of the three persons wanted, at the gangway of the 'Speedwell,' not far from

ten o'clock to-night, and receive his ten thousand pounds. Five minutes thereafter a steam tug can come alongside with a sheriff's posse, and attach the brig in the name of the abandoned creditors. Thus Copps will deliver Captain Tobias to Grindem, as per arrangement, and we will recover him by due legal procedure, with which we will have no open connection!"

"The case is well arranged," said Captain Tobias, "but I can improve upon it. Can you get Grindem ashore and keep him there, between the hours of four and eight this afternoon, Mr. Copps?"

"Certainly. He'll do anything I tell him!" assured Copps.

"And is there a way of stirring up the creditors in the case, in the course of an hour or two?" proceeded Captain Tobias.

"An hour is ample, sir. I have only to send a hint to the attorney of one of the banks in which is maturing some of Grindem's paper!"

"Then here is the way we'll work the job," said the old navigator. "First, you will get Grindem ashore during the hours named. Second, you will have the 'Speedwell' seized just before dark. Third, I'll have my brig towed out from her dock, at dusk, and anchored precisely where the 'Speedwell' is now lying. Thus, we'll actually change ships, substituting mine for Grindem's, without his having the remotest suspicion of the fact, and all that takes place thereafter will form an amusing farce."

The two detectives beamed upon Captain Tobias, as joyfully and confidently as if he had been a member of their great Secret Prowlery.

"This is capitally arranged," cried Copps. "I couldn't have planned it better myself!"

growled Mopps. "Let's get to work on the instant."

A few minutes later the two detectives left the house, in possession of the most precise instructions for their guidance.

They had scarcely gone when Helen and Albert came out of an inner room and hung themselves caressingly upon the old navigator's neck, one upon each side of him, bending over his chair.

"You seem very happy to-day, children," he greeted, returning their caresses.

"It is because you have proposed to sail to-morrow," said Albert. "We see that you are not happy here, with all this excitement, and so many strange men hanging about, and we want to go forth with you again into the world's great freedom."

"Then I can hit your case exactly, dears," said Captain Tobias. "The 'Rover' will pull out into the stream at sundown, all loaded, with the crew and officers aboard, and will sail as soon as you please thereafter. It will be a happy send-off for you, dears," added the old navigator, "for you will then be husband and wife, and the beautiful voyage before you will be your bridal voyage."

"How, sir?" stammered Albert.

"Dear Captain Tobias, what do you mean?" asked Helen, caressing him nervously.

"I believe you left it to me to name the hour of your wedding, didn't you?"

"Yes, sir, assented the lovers in chorus.

"Very good," observed the old navigator, looking at his watch. "It is now three o'clock. At four a reverend friend will be here to tie the knot in the presence of a few friends I have invited, and you may accordingly proceed to get ready for the sacrifice!"

The delight of the young couple at these arrangements may be taken for granted. We will only say that there were never three happier persons in the world than were the objects of John Grindem's plotting.

CHAPTER XVIII.

In a little back room at an hotel, near the river, sat a couple of men, in a cloud of tobacco smoke, with a bottle and tumblers between them.

They were Grindem and Copps. They were

about equally nervous and fidgety, because about equally anxious in regard to the issue of their projects.

"For my part, I do not remember to have ever passed a few hours quite so uncomfortably," said Grindem, nervously, looking around and listening, as if in constant dread. "The fact is, Captain Tobias is as shrewd a man as can be found, and I have a mortal fear that your agent will not be able to entrap him."

"But haven't I told you that my combination is sure to work?" returned Copps, reproachfully. "Captain Tobias is just as certain to loom up to your gaze, with his young friends, when you go off to the brig, as you are to draw another breath. For once I have managed to fix the job so that there can be no possible miscarriage!"

"Then it's mere nervousness, of course, that ails me," said Grindem. "In any case, no want of confidence in you, Mr. Copps, is intended. But this," and he looked at the blank walls around him, "is a poor place of amusement."

"True, sir, but I wanted you to keep out of sight during these few hours of crisis," said Copps. "If anyone is really looking for you, let them suppose that you have already left the city."

He looked at his watch, and added:

"I think we may now venture forth, Mr. Grindem. It's rather too soon, to be sure, to pull out to the brig, as we must make allowances for delays; but we can keep shady on the bank till we are sure of ourselves, and meanwhile a bit of fresh air will not come amiss to us!"

They soon left the hotel together, with their hats slouched over their eyes, and their coat collars muffling their features.

"It gives me a singular sensation to go sneaking through the streets in this fashion," muttered the fallen merchant. "I don't look much now like the John Grindem of even one short week ago!"

"No man does, sir, after being turned inside out, as you have been," said the detective. "You are, of course, philosopher enough to see that the change in your status has been brought about naturally."

"Oh! I'm not complaining—merely soliloquizing," said Grindem. "I am of course, reaping what I have sown."

He smiled sarcastically as he recalled what he had so recently said to his wife about reaping his great harvest.

"But I nevertheless feel pretty hard against Captain Tobias," continued the fallen man, savagely. "If I really get him into my clutches he'll wish he had died at Cocos. After making me pay roundly he might have spared me the publication of that history, if only out of regard for my family."

"The fault was not so much the captain's, as near as I can learn, sir. His friends naturally got hold of him, and then the reporters got hold of his friends, so that the thing cropped up naturally in the newspapers. But it was, nevertheless, a hard blow to bear."

"It finished me, Copps! Since that hour I've only been a corpse above ground. But once I get hold of Tobias, with a stout ship under me, and a willing crew around me—"

He finished with a gesture that would have startled Captain Tobias, if the old navigator had chanced to see it.

The couple had now reached the river. They looked sharply around.

(To be Continued.)

THE "SARMATIAN" STEAMSHIP.

THE voyage of the Marquis of Lorne and her Royal Highness Princess Louise, Marchioness of Lorne, from England to Canada, where his Excellency will henceforth reside as Governor-General for her Majesty the Queen, was an occasion of peculiar interest. It had been arranged that the Marquis and his Royal spouse should be conveyed across the Atlantic in H.M.S. "Black Prince," the ship of the

Mediterranean squadron, under command of his Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh. The "Black Prince" had left Malta to come home for this dignified service, but an accidental break-down of her engines required some repairs to be made, which could not be completed in time. Her Majesty's Government, therefore, engaged the well-known fine steamship "Sarmatian," of the line belonging to the Montreal Steamship Company, Messrs. Allan, Brothers, and Co., of Liverpool, to convey the new Governor-General and her Royal Highness, with their suite, from that port to Montreal.

The "Sarmatian" is a magnificent vessel of 4,000 tons, with splendid internal fittings and luxurious accommodation for high-class passengers. The Marquis of Lorne and the Princess embarked at an early hour of the morning. We feel sure that all her Majesty's subjects on both sides of the Atlantic heartily wish them a comfortable voyage and a prosperous entrance upon the new career of public life opened to them in the foremost of British colonies in North America.

DOMESTIC SLAVERY.

THE grievance of some of the young ladies who condescend to act as domestic servants are, as a rule, of an imaginary nature. They are, indeed, exceptionally fortunate persons, and lord it over their employers with the assurance that comes of conscious strength. There is, however, a large class of servants of whom this cannot be said, and in whom it is desirable that the public, and especially ladies, should begin to take some interest. We allude to the servants of lodging and boarding-houses.

A letter appeared in "The Times" setting forth the work which a particular girl in one of these establishments has to undertake. We cannot go through the list of duties, but it is truly formidable. The unfortunate girl never goes to bed till past midnight—sometimes between two and three. Yet she has to be up at six, and she begins her labours every morning "by filling seven baths, for each of which she carries two cans of water from the basement to the bedroom floors of a four-storied house." After this every minute of the day has its own occupation, and it may be supposed, since the poor child is only seventeen, that such fatigues do not tend to improve "her health and strength."

If this picture is not overdrawn—and we believe it is not—the writer of the letter is quite justified in questioning whether we have yet succeeded in emancipating all our slaves. He proposes that people who go into lodgings should make it a rule "to inquire in what way the work of the house is performed," and should "avoid houses in which there are not sufficient servants."

This is good advice, and we hope it will be followed; but in the meantime the human monsters who employ these overworked girls have an immense advantage over them. They secure servants who have not before had "places," and, if their victims rebel, threaten to refuse them the "character" which would enable them to improve their circumstances. Cannot benevolent ladies set to work and invent some method of helping a class who so urgently need their aid?

M. GAMBETTA went up in the captive balloon recently. A good deal has happened since his previous ascent—that of the 7th of October, 1870, when he quitted the besieged city.

Cremation in Gotha is certainly not expensive as each body submitted to the process will cost about £1 5s. The "Columbarium," or crematory edifice, in the new cemetery at Gotha, has been successfully completed, and regulations have been issued by the town authorities specifying the size of each coffin, and that of the urns to be placed in the Columbarium at the conclusion of the process.

BOUND TO THE TRAWL.

By the Author of "Clytie Cranbourne," "The Golden Bowl," "Poor Loo," etc.

CHAPTER XLVI.

AN UNPLEASANT SURPRISE.

IT is the morning after the reception at the British Embassy, and Minnie and her mother are seated in their handsome chamber, the bed and toilette arrangements being screened off by heavy curtains which hide and cover the recess in which they stand.

A handsome room luxuriously furnished, while communicating with it are a sitting-room and two bedrooms, which Colonel Chartres and George Garland respectively occupy.

The ladies are busy, for notwithstanding the orders given to dressmakers, there are still many things to be looked after and arranged by themselves, for there is a *soirée dansante* at the Palace of Brussels to-night, and greatly to their surprise, Minnie and her mother have been honoured with an invitation.

"Uncle has been elected on the council of the deputation in place of a member who could not leave England," explained Minnie. "I believe it is all through Herr von König; but we are going to the ball, that is the grand point. The idea of George wanting us to go to the field of Waterloo on such a day."

"I think it is a pity we didn't," sighed her mother; "we shan't get another chance, and there is such a nice party going. I suppose they have started."

"No, they have not; they start in half an hour's time, but we shall be tired to death, mamma, particularly if you remember we shall have to dine and dress when we return, and yet be at the palace at seven o'clock in time to be presented before the ball begins."

But Mrs. Garland was not persuadable. It was useless trying to convince her that the fatigue would be too great, or that the fine, mist-like rain that was falling would spoil the pleasure of the drive to the battle-field, twelve miles off.

She had made up her mind to go, for Colonel Chumleigh and Herr von Guilderstein were both to be of the party, besides Max and her son and brother, and Mrs. Garland, though she had three grown up children, did not for a moment consider that she was not still both eligible and desirable from a matrimonial point of view.

Indeed the widow had come to the conclusion that widowhood was very tame and quiet, and that a new husband, if she could marry off or otherwise dispose of her children, would be to her like a renewal of youth and a fresh start in life.

So at the last minute Minnie was carried off to see the field of Waterloo, though much against her will, for she had meant to spend the day quietly, so that she might be equal to a considerable amount of dancing in the evening.

She was repaid for her concession, however. Two open carriages were waiting for the party, and Mrs. Garland, with Herr von Guilderstein, Colonel Chumleigh and George got into one, while Minnie with her uncle and Max seated themselves in the other.

The air was bitterly cold; a thick, fine rain fell, and the ride was by no means as agreeable as it might have been even though Max and Minnie were sitting opposite each other, the love-light in their eyes, which must surely sooner or later betray them to each other, and to the keen, jealous scrutiny that is so often upon them.

I am not going to follow the party in their long, comfortless drive, for, though the rain blew off for a time, they were so chilled and uncomfortable, that even the ladies were glad to drink the hot milk with a dash of brandy in it which the roadside inns afforded.

On they drove over that famous road until they came to the farmhouse of Hougomont, where they alighted and were taken in charge by a guide, who talked as though he had crammed

for the occasion a dull lesson which he must repeat by rote—a lesson that would admit of no variation, and that he was bound to get through without taking breath.

Of course bullets, found on the ploughed field that once witnessed such a sanguinary struggle, were produced, and Minnie and Max paused and looked into the ditch with dreamy eyes, conjuring up a faint idea of the scene when the order to the men crouched there was given—"Up guards and at 'em!"

Very scrupulously they went over all the memorable spots, climbed the Belgian mound to make a closer acquaintance with the lion on its summit, and to get a better view of the misty country around; visited the Museum, then walked to the English church in the village of Waterloo, to see the monuments, and all this time Max von König kept near Minnie's side, to Colonel Chumleigh's extreme disgust, and monopolised the greater part of her conversation.

But poor Minnie was dreadfully tired; walking over ploughed fields in a pair of boots that are not quite comfortable is sufficient to try the temper of the sweetest woman, and, though she was not a girl to be cross, she could not help being silent, and thus the party came back to the hotel, somewhat exhausted, very hungry, and decidedly unfit for any further exertion.

Arrived there a scarcely pleasant surprise awaited the Garlands, for just as they entered the hotel a woman's voice said:

"Ah! Here you are at last. I was wondering what had become of you." And Amy Garland walked up to her mother's side and just touched her cheek with her lips, then turned to Minnie and conferred upon her a like frigid caress.

"Whatever brings you here?" inquired her mother, in amazement; "we thought you were in Paris with your aunt. Has anything dreadful happened?"

"No, nothing, except that we didn't get on together; but don't you see we are blocking the way. Just ask the manager to let me have a room near yours. How are you, uncle?"

Colonel Chartres' greeting was cool. He did not like this niece of his, and more particularly he did not approve of her coming upon them in such an unexpected manner.

Her brother George, indeed, was the only one who received her with any real pleasure or cordiality. He wanted a companion, and Minnie had been so monopolised by the others that he had often been left to entertain himself.

To Minnie her sister's arrival was like a prelude of coming misfortune. There could be no doubt that Amy was beautiful—also that she was unscrupulous.

She delighted in robbing another girl of her admirer, even though she did not care an atom for the man herself, and Minnie instinctively felt that Max von König would be lured away from her own side, and if she lost him life would never be quite the same again. There was no time for conversation, however; scarcely had they taken off their hats when the bell rang for dinner, and the three ladies, with a few hurried and trifling touches to their toilettes, descended to the *salle à manger*.

Dinner was half over before Amy began to understand why they were in such a hurry, and what was going to take place later on.

"A ball!" she exclaimed, her eyes widening with excitement, "and at the palace! And you are all going? Of course I must go too. You will take me, uncle?" looking at Colonel Chartres with a glance in which entreaty and command were oddly mingled.

"Quite impossible, Amy. We have had immense difficulty in getting invitations for your mother and sister. It was a combination of accident and good fortune that enabled us to succeed, and we never thought of seeing you."

"Well, I think Minnie might let me go instead of her. You can go another time, Min. I was never inside a palace in my life, and I may not get the chance again."

But Minnie's face became pale, while she literally gasped with astonishment and fear. If she stayed behind who would dance that waits

with Max which she had promised him? Then there was her lovely dress—a new one for the occasion, and there were the flowers which Max had asked her to accept and wear. Surely no one could be cruel enough to ask her to forego all this?

It was dashing the cup of happiness from her lips just when she was on the very point of drinking the delicious draught, and she scarcely knew what reply she made, but there must have been something about dress in it, for her sister said, hastily:

"Why, I can wear your dress, to be sure. What suits you will suit me, and I am certain it is a handsome one if uncle paid for it."

Poor Minnie! Her sister, in her unbounded selfishness, had often tried, and many times succeeded, in taking from her things she had set her heart upon.

But this was too much for even unselfish Minnie to put up with, and yet she scarcely knew how to refuse resolutely. So instead of making any verbal reply, she looked at her uncle with something pathetic in her sweet blue eyes, and he at once said:

"No; Minnie will go to-night if any of us go. A young lady who quarrels with her relatives and comes and goes as she pleases must not be surprised at finding that people cannot alter their arrangements to suit her convenience, so you will have to make the best of it, Amy."

"Well, mamma, you at any rate needn't go. You might let me take your place. It isn't as though you could dance or enjoy a ball very much; besides, you look tired; you'd be much better in bed. A ball is a place for young people, and I should enjoy it so."

"Thank you, my dear, so shall I. I don't think I am too old for it yet, at least I don't feel so. If you had not been so very selfish in asking your sister and me to give up our anticipated pleasure to you, we might have thought of doing so had it been possible. Now I think, Minnie, we will go and dress."

And Mrs. Garland rose from her seat and walked from the room, her daughters following her.

"Cool of Amy, wasn't it?" remarked George Garland, with a low laugh, and addressing his uncle.

"Yes; but quite like her," was the reply. "I wish she had not come here just now; she will cause nothing but pain and vexation."

"What did you say? Pardon me, but is that young lady your sister?" asked Max von Konig, who could not help hearing a few scraps of the previous remarks, yet not quite enough to understand them.

"Yes, we never expected her here. She was suggesting that mamma or Minnie should stay away from the ball in order to allow her to go this evening."

"But Miss Minnie will go, will she not?" was the next question asked, not without some apparent anxiety.

"Of course, uncle takes care of that. Minnie is his favourite; she's a trump. I used to like Amy best when I was a boy, but now there's no comparison between them except in looks, there Amy has the advantage."

"I should think that was purely a matter of taste," was the reply which fell also on Colonel Chatterbox's ears, and it is scarcely necessary to observe that he liked the young man all the better for it.

"You certainly have become better looking than you used to be, Minnie," remarked Miss Garland, in a condescending tone, as she sat in a comfortable arm-chair and critically watched her mother and sister dress themselves for the ball.

She had not once offered them any assistance, not even made a suggestion, and when her mother claimed her help for a moment she had yawned and prepared to move so languidly that Minnie had stepped forward and given the required assistance before her sister was quite on her feet.

At last the dressing, which is often the most enjoyable part of an evening's amusement, was over and the long swing glass told them that not another touch, or a flower, or a fold would

improve them, and Amy gave a little sigh of rage and envy as she fixed her eyes upon her sister and felt that she herself had never looked so lovely.

"She has got a secret," she thought, as she eyed her critically. "The soft look in her eyes, the timid, trembling expression of her lips like that of a sensitive child waiting and hoping to be caressed. Yes, she is in love. That is the secret; but whether it is returned or not is a thing to be found out. After all, Miss Minnie, I think you would have found it more to your advantage to have given up this evening's amusement to me than to have made me your enemy as you have done. You may have robbed me of my share of uncle Basil's wealth, but it will go hard with us both if I don't take from you what you value far more highly, particularly if it is a man's fickle heart."

But she uttered none of this aloud. She only watched them as they moved about the room, and noticed how tenderly Minnie took some natural flowers out of a box in which they had reached her, how she buried her face in them as though bestowing a caress upon them before fastening them in her hair and on her dress, and she formed her own conclusions. When they were all gone and she was left alone, she sat before the fire far into the night planning and plotting against the happiness of her only sister.

What an evening that was! Minnie Garland felt that her wildest anticipations of pleasure had never approached the reality she was now enjoying, and yet there was just one little pang of pain and doubt in it all that made her feel it could not last.

Yes, even although she happened this night to be the guest of royalty, and to have the man whom she most desired standing by her side, with a look in his eyes when they were bent upon her that could bear but one interpretation, yet she felt that trial and trouble were in store for her, and that her sister Amy would be the cause of it.

But she was not a girl to meet troubles half way, and indeed the scene around her was enough to banish everything but the immediate present from her thoughts, for never in her life had her eyes rested upon such a succession of splendid scenes.

I pass over her presentation to the king and queen in company with a number of other ladies who had not previously been presented to their majesties, and say nothing of the tremor of nervousness that came over her when those tall and august personages bent and spoke some gracious words of welcome to her, for this ordeal did not last long, and she with her mother at length got back to the room where the colonel and George and Max, with his uncle, were waiting for them.

How magnificent the ball-room was; at the higher end, on a raised dais, were seats for the royal family, while the ladies and gentlemen of the court were grouped on either side, a sacred space being kept clear in front, and down the whole length of the room there was left a narrow clearing, in which dozens of couples, in spite of the crush, were vainly trying to dance, while, on the other side of the room seats were ranged one above another, where chaperones and those who only wished to view and not take part in the dancing could sit and watch the changing scene.

The polished oak floor was slippery as glass, but of course Minnie danced with Max and her brother, and with Herr von Guilderstein and with her uncle.

Mrs. Garland tried also, but her performance in such a crowd was not a success, and she soon accepted the arm of Herr von Guilderstein, who led her through the magnificent suite of rooms thrown open to the guests on this occasion. In some of them there were card parties, in others couples were seated flirting or talking in low, soft tones, and no doubt many a tale of love was whispered and eagerly listened to that night.

Rumour said that more than a thousand invitations had been given for this soiree dante,

and one could well believe that everyone who had been invited was actually present. A quick glance at the crowded rooms was enough for that.

Several times during the evening the king and queen, followed by the rest of the court, walked through the rooms, and many a young heart was made glad with a gracious word or a kind smile from royalty.

"I never dreamed of anything so beautiful," said Minnie, in a low tone, as she leaned on the arm of Max von Konig and looked at the glistening chandeliers in the ball-room, with their hundreds of wax tapers making the huge prisms of cut glass flash like diamonds. "And the uniforms and dresses," she went on. "I suppose almost every nationality in the civilised world must be represented here?"

"Not quite, I think," replied Max, with a smile; "but shall we sit down in this room," and he led her into one comparatively empty. "It leads to the supper-room," he added, "and the ladies only are to go into supper with their majesties."

The girl acquiesced, and they sat down on an ottoman, while a dangerous silence fell upon them, and more than once words rose to the lips of the young man which he feared and yet longed to utter.

Only once before in his life had he met a woman who could make his heart throb, and every hope and desire of his being centre in her, and she had passed away years ago. Gone with a life that he but dimly remembered and never thought of but with a shudder, a condition of existence that seemed as far from him as their antinatal condition must have done to the disciples of Pythagoras; but dim as it was in his memory, he could not quite drive the recollection from him, and this night it stood before his mind's eye more clearly than it had done for years past, and he felt that he could not ask this fair girl to share his future without telling her something, at any rate, about the past.

More than this, his uncle had to be consulted. The old man was kind and loved him as though he had been his own son. He was rich too, and supplied him liberally with all he could desire, but a wife would make a change in the lives of both of them, and as Herr von Guilderstein had promised to make him his heir, the young man felt he would not be quite justified in asking Minnie to marry him without first obtaining his consent.

Beyond this, he had known the girl only a few days, and though he loved her and was satisfied he should continue to do so all his life, she might not have learned to care for him so soon, and he might spoil all by speaking to her prematurely.

And while he thought over all this and hesitated, even with the arowal of love trembling upon his very lips, and Minnie sat by his side silent, but, oh! so happy, playing with her fan and waiting for what she felt so blissfully must surely come, the golden opportunity slipped by, the two lives that like rushing streams were so surely flowing to meet each other, were suddenly arrested in their course, and Colonel Chumleigh, with his flaming red hair and rodder face, came towards the silent couple, saying:

"We have lost our first dance, Miss Garland. I hunted for you everywhere, but the second you promised me is just going to commence; I am glad I have found you at last."

Poor Minnie could not reciprocate his feeling of satisfaction, but she said, sweetly enough:

"The ball-room is too crowded for us to dance with any comfort. See how my arm was bruised just now with part of an officer's uniform knocking against me. I hope you will excuse me, I feel tired, particularly after our walk over the field of Waterloo this morning."

"You owe that bruise on your arm to the clumsiness of your partner," said the soldier, with a glance of anger at Max.

"But the girl replied, with a smile:

"I hope not, for uncle would never forgive himself, as I was dancing with him. Ah!



[AN INTRODUCTION.]

There he is, with mamma on his arm; they are looking for us."

And she and Max rose. The time was passed; the opportunity was gone. Not once again that night were those two alone even in a crowd, for Colonel Chumleigh kept close to them as though he had been their shadow, and once when Mrs. Garland claimed the attention of Max for one minute, the fiery-looking soldier offered the girl his arm, and until she was marshalled off with her mother to follow in the train of royalty to the supper room, he never gave her an opportunity of leaving him.

There was nothing to mark the rest of the evening as unusually delightful to poor little Minnie.

True, the king spoke to her in the supper-room and asked if she were a good sailor, or suffered much from mal de mer, and she replied to him as she would have spoken to any other gentleman, and a few minutes later, when he had turned to address some other lady, and Minnie heard the answer prefaced with "Yes, your majesty," and, "No, your majesty," she herself blushed crimson, fearing she had been guilty of some terrible breach of etiquette, and the very thought of it spoilt her appetite and took away the flavour from the delicious-looking paté which she had just commenced eating. It was over at last.

The music was silent; the glitter, the pomp and the splendour were dimmed, and the ladies and gentlemen fighting their way out to their carriages were no whit more gentle or courteous than a similar crowd elbowing its way out of a London theatre.

Nay, rather less so, and more than one audible comment to that effect fell upon the ears of sundry young officers who were pushing recklessly to the front, and perhaps for the moment cooled their ardour.

Only when he was handing her into their carriage could Max von Konig manage in the darkness to possess himself of one of Minnie's hands and press it warmly as though he would like to retain it always.

This silent action set the girl's heart beating happily.

"He loves me! he loves me!" she murmured to herself, with blissful content. "Max von Konig loves me, and I am the happiest girl in Belgium this night."

The next morning brought a decided change upon the aspect of affairs. When a party is just evenly and nicely balanced the arrival of a fresh and altogether foreign element is apt to disarrange the whole of the harmonious fabric, and this was exactly what Amy's unexpected arrival had done.

With a great deal of trouble, by the kindness of friends who had managed that he should be a substitute for an absent member of the council, and by a handsome subscription towards the expense of the basket and address, which was not yet covered, Colonel Chartres had succeeded in getting cards for himself, George, his sister, and niece for the fêtes and entertainments provided for the deputation by the Belgian nation. But Amy's arrival upset all the old soldier's calculations.

Minnie he was determined should not give way for her, and he would not even try to get his eldest niece added to the party.

"I can't ask for admission for her; I should only be refused," he replied, coldly and firmly, when George Garland sounded him upon the subject the next morning, and it was therefore with something like a rueful countenance that he came to convey the decision to his sister.

Miss Garland, however, was a young woman with a purpose in view, and she smiled satirically as she said:

"Never mind. I daresay I shall manage it. Isn't there a man here named Major Barlow mixed up in this affair. I thought I saw his name in the list of members."

"No doubt. He is one of the leaders."

"Has he brought a mother or sister with him?"

"No, I believe not. He has paid great attention to Minnie when he has had the chance."

"Indeed! Minnie seems to have been a good deal sought after," in a slightly satirical tone.

"She has," was the quiet reply; "she has grown uncommonly pretty, and she's amiable, too. She never says or does an ill-natured thing, and a man takes that into account when he's looking for a wife."

"You seem to have studied the subject," sneered his sister.

"I have. That's one of my reasons for admiring Katie Jessop so much. But I don't suppose she'll ever have me," with a sigh, "worse luck."

Amy turned away impatiently. She hated Katie Jessop, if possible, more bitterly than ever, and would have liked nothing better than to have done some spiteful thing to injure her; and next to Katie she was beginning to dislike her own sister, for Amy had been unsuccessful in most of her schemes in life, and the bitterness of envy was added to the sting of wounded vanity.

A few seconds later, when she and her brother were making their way through the salle à manger to the table set apart for Colonel Chartres' party for breakfast, a gentleman upon whom Amy's eye rested bowed and rose to take her proffered hand.

"No idea you were here," he said, in a tone and manner that George thought by far too familiar.

"Yes, I arrived yesterday. My brother—Major Barlow. I shall see you again," and she passed on, while the two men just bowed to each other.

"By Jove! she belongs to them, does she?" mused the major, as he resumed his seat; "the same name, of course. It never occurred to me before, but I thought there was a likeness between that sweet little girl and some face I had known. I must cultivate you, Miss Amy, if only for the sake of your sister."

Meanwhile Amy was devoting herself to the entertainment of Max von Konig.

(To be Continued.)



[A TREACHEROUS BENEFACTRESS.]

"MY LOVE IS LIKE A RED, RED ROSE."

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Sinned Against: Not Sinning," &c.

CHAPTER XLIII.

Oh, love for a year,
For a week, for a day;
But alas! for the love
That must love away.

THE strange, chequered, "sad, mad and bad" career of Isola Marbourne is closed, and after life's fitful fever she sleeps well. Clement Woodleigh and Tom Bowden alone followed her to her last resting place, and lay her beside the remains of the brother whom she had loved so well.

No stone marks the resting place of the wicked baseborn twins of Brakeholme; the world knows them no more; and they pass out of the memories of all, save that of Clement Woodleigh, whose fate has been so curiously bound up with theirs.

Deeply and earnestly has he studied the contents of the little packet given to him by Isola Marbourne upon her dying bed. So many strange things have taken place in connection with the Brakeholme family, that he fancied he could not be surprised at any further occurrences. However, as he sits and ponders over this newest and most extraordinary link in the chain, he is puzzled to know exactly how to act.

At first he is determined to go to the Earl of Brakeholme and tell him all; lay the documents before him, and ask his opinion. It is thus common sense urges him to act; but then his heart rises up in rebellion against his calmer judgment, and a dark flush passes over his

handsome face as he lays down the documents and walks up and down the room, as is his custom when in a dilemma.

Finally he makes his decision. Clement Woodleigh determines that, for the present, he will not say anything to the Earl of Brakeholme respecting the documents which have so strangely fallen into his hands. A few days later sees him in Paris again, and there were many curious glances cast at the handsome, stalwart Englishman, who seems to be so eagerly looking for something or for someone, which or who seems always to escape him.

In Paris he again meets the Earl and Countess of Brakeholme. The former seems to have given up all hope of finding his daughter, and says as much to Clement Woodleigh as the two men stroll along the pleasant Bois de Boulogne. "There seems to be some fate against my finding Isola," says the Earl of Brakeholme, musingly; "all our efforts seem to be so futile. No sooner do we appear to be on the track of this clan than the clue is suddenly lost, and we have to begin all over again."

"True," assents his companion, not without an inward twinge of conscience, as he thinks of the packet in his possession; "but I do not despair of our yet finding the right clue."

"I confess you are more sanguine than I am, it is one of the attributes of youth to be so," replies the earl, with the sad little smile so habitual to his pensive features; "but I am now very much inclined to think," he continues, confidentially, "that the Countess of Brakeholme is right, and that the Lady Isola, from her early associations, must have imbibed some of the ideas of the people she lived amongst, and must care to remain with them or she would make all effort to leave them."

Clement Woodleigh cannot bear the woman he loves even so tacitly blamed, and he replies somewhat excitedly:

"I do not think so—with all due deference to her ladyship. We should recollect how very ignorant the Lady Isola is of the ways of the world—she possesses no cunning, no deceit, and

could scarcely conceive the idea of hoodwinking her persecutors and endeavouring to escape."

"You are, no doubt, right," says the earl; "but, as the countess remarks, there is a great deal in early association."

"Doubtless, but the Countess of Brakeholme had ample opportunities of judging of the Lady Isola's gentle nature, and it was she who chiefly spoke of the natural refinement and untutored grace and dignity of the Lady Isola's nature."

"Ah, the countess was naturally interested in the poor girl's strange history. At all events I am beginning to come round to my wife's way of thinking, and to feel almost certain that Isola possibly feels more sympathy with her old associates than she can possibly feel for a woman of culture like the Countess of Brakeholme."

Clement Woodleigh is amazed at this change in the sentiments of the whilom genial, kindly and considerate nobleman. But he does not make any remark about it; and a feeling of satisfaction arises in his breast, and he newly pledges himself to work secretly and steadily until he finds the whereabouts of the Lady Isola.

Contrary to what her husband had expected, the Countess of Brakeholme declares her intention of staying for some time longer in Paris. The earl at length becomes more reconciled to this arrangement, as he has discovered an inestimable treasure in the person of a particularly greasy and shabby-looking entomologist and bird merchant in a back slum down by the Seine, and considerably to the rear of Notre Dame.

Monsieur Goureau is a good specimen of the lower-class Parisian. Dirty, mean, cunning, and treacherous, he is such a man as might be bought by the highest bidder. With no sense of honour, no sense of religion, no kindness of heart, he loved money beyond all things in this world and the next, and ground down his customers and lodgers, and fleeced them in every way in his power.

For Monsieur Goureau lets lodgings. The

small house he occupies is let out in tenements, and woe be to the lodger who cannot pay the francs for rent every Sunday morning. No quarter—no favour does Monsieur Goureau show to anyone, and well the unlucky lodger is aware of this, and trembles as the heavy foot of the landlord is heard upon the stair.

"Ah! Petite!" exclaims Goureau, apostrophising a huge green parrot which swings in the dark little shop, "we shall make a good day's work of this! Fourteen francs owed this week by the lodgers! Fourteen francs, Petite! Think of that, and all paid but that of the English demoiselles! Ah! peste! ces Anglais!"

Goureau wears dirty green trousers and a blue blouse, and his stubby black hair and beard are closely clipped around his bullet head. Not by any means a prepossessing-looking person is Monsieur Adolphe Goureau as he again apostrophises his only confidential companion.

"Out, Petite! who can say Goureau is not a charitable man? Has not Goureau allowed the English demoiselles to stay in his house two whole weeks without the payment for the apartment? But Goureau is poor. Ah, Petite! so poor!" and he rolls up the dirty yellow whites of his eyes, and shrugs his shoulders as only the French bourgeois can. "Goureau is so poor that he cannot let the English demoiselles stay any longer without the payment for the apartment!"

The green parrot chuckles and growls, and gives vent to its feelings in a succession of diabolical screams intermingled with the frequent oaths with which its master interlards his conversation.

"Ah, Marie!" continues Goureau, addressing a sour-looking old woman in a short jacket and a much-befrilled white cap, "the English demoiselles, are they in their apartment?"

"Yes, monsieur; that is to say they were in the apartment before I went to the church."

"Is the one yet ill?" he asks, with some appearance of interest.

"Yes, she has the fever yet," replies Marie, "and they have not the money for the apartment. They are yet without any, and one demoiselle who is well says she cannot get the work to earn the money, but we know she can get it if she will only try," and the old woman fears hideously.

"She must get me the money or she cannot have my apartment," says Goureau, his villainous low brow lowering. "She must give me the money, or she must go."

"Why not speak to her yourself, monsieur?" suggests Marie.

"Are you sure she is in?"

"Oh, she is in the apartment, monsieur," replies Marie, readily, "for she cannot leave mademoiselle, her sister."

"Is mademoiselle so ill then?"

"Yes, monsieur, but you had better see for yourself."

CHAPTER XLIV.

Mind make money, boy—
Honest, if you can;
But mind make money,
For money makes the man.

A small, meagrely furnished apartment, with the roof so sloping and slanting at one side, that an adult of moderate height could not possibly stand upright against the wall. A small stove stands in an angle at one corner of the room; a cheap deal table, a couple of dilapidated chairs, and a poor looking bed, complete the inventory of the furniture of this apartment on the top floor of Monsieur Goureau's house in the Passage du Marteau.

There is no attempt of any kind at ornamentation or decoration. The place looks miserable and poverty-stricken, and accords well with the aspect of its occupants.

The latter are two young women, mere girls, and in the prostrate, fever-stricken form of the one we recognise the Lady Isola Marbourne, whilst the woman with the gentle, lovely, despair-stricken face, is none other than Muriel.

Muriel! but Muriel with a stony, set look upon her beautiful countenance. She looks ten years older than she did a few weeks ago, for there are dark circles around her sunken eyes, and hollows in her pinched white face, as she stands with clasped hands and gazes despairingly upon the sick girl, who lies on the bed, moaning piteously.

"A lily of the valley," had Ernest Maybrick called Muriel but a short time before. A broken, crushed lily she now looks; a wreck of her former self. The sick girl becomes more and more restless, and Muriel takes a glass of water from the table, and moistens her parched lips.

"Great heavens!" she exclaims; "she will die for the want of proper necessities. Die just as I thought I was about to fulfil my promise; and I cannot, I dare not, make our situation known for fear of detection. There may be spies belonging to the gang in this very house for anything I can tell; and she might be taken away again. It is hard—very hard. Just as everything seemed likely to turn out well, to think Isola should be stricken down and all our plans frustrated. And what can I do?" she continues, shaking on her knees by the bedside, whilst the tears run down her white cheeks. "I am helpless, friendless, and moneyless; what can a woman do in such an emergency as this?"

It is but too true what Muriel says. At last she has succeeded, after many risk and dangers, in finding out the whereabouts of the Lady Isola, and in effecting her release. All seemed going on as well as could be expected. She had even recovered the money for her golden ornaments—that "crown of thorns" again, and all things looked favourable when the Lady Isola was stricken down with fever.

Stricken down with fell disease in the little temporary lodging which they had taken, and now their last penny gone, Muriel is in utter despair. Some kind Sisters of Charity have taken her baby into a neighbouring crèche, and Muriel knows, were she to appeal to them for further help, that her appeal would not be in vain, but she has gone through so many dangers and strange vicissitudes, that she naturally shrinks from making a confidant of any stranger.

But on this bright Sabbath morning she finds herself without food—without anything but a cup of cold water, with not one of the necessities requisite for a sick person in such a condition as the Lady Isola is in, with two weeks rent due, no money and a hard, grasping landlord.

Unconsciously she offers up an almost voiceless prayer for help, and then rising up, Muriel determines to seek out the Sisters of Charity, and to ask some assistance from them.

The woman is faint and weak from anxiety, watching, and want of sufficient food, and as she stands up her head reels, and she sinks down upon the bed beside her.

She sits there with closed eyes, trying to recover her scattered senses, when she hears a heavy footstep on the stairs, and presently there is a knock at the door of the apartment.

"Come in," she says, faintly, in French, and her heart sinks at the thought of facing her hard, cruel landlord while she is yet unprepared with the money for his rent.

Monsieur Goureau enters the room, and glances keenly around, looking with an injured air at the sick girl lying on the bed, whilst the scarcely less sick-looking Muriel advances to meet him.

"Good-morning, mademoiselle," he says, less from a desire to be courteous and polite than from a Frenchman's invariable habit of prefacing a long remark with such a salutation upon first meeting.

"Good-morning, monsieur," she replies, her heart sinking as she looks into his cruel, harsh, relentless countenance.

"I have come for the rent, mademoiselle," he continues, "for the two weeks' rent due by you and by mademoiselle, your sister. Ah! she is better, is she not?"

"No; I regret my sister is not by any means

better, monsieur, and I am doubly sorry to have to say that I am not prepared to pay you your rent this morning."

Goureau's sallow face becomes purple, and the veins upon his low forehead stand out with rage.

"Diable!" he exclaims, taking a step forward, and shaking his clenched fist in Muriel's face. "Diable!" he repeats, "I tell you I must have my money, mademoiselle—must have it to-day! I must have my money for my two weeks' rent of my apartment. My four francs I must have, and you must bring them to me this day, or you must go this night."

"Monsieur," says the miserable, terrified woman, "you cannot mean to say that you would send my sister out of your house in the state she is in? It would kill her!"

"And will it not kill me if I have not my money—my four francs?" he exclaims, gesticulating wildly; "I am poor. I cannot afford to be robbed of my four francs, or I shall not have enough money with which to buy my bread. Mademoiselle, you must get it—you must give me the money. You cannot make me starve."

"Monsieur Goureau," says Muriel, with pale, nervous lips and trembling voice, "since yesterday I have eaten nothing but a bit of bread given to me for charity by a lodger in the house scarcely richer than we are ourselves. A little soup I was given I have tried to make my sick sister eat. That is all we have had. Was it not for that timely help we must have starved. I have not got your rent, monsieur, to-day, nor have I any valuables to sell and procure it; but if you will wait until to-morrow I shall ask it from the good sisters who are caring for my child, and then try and pay them as best I can."

"No! no!" he exclaims, vehemently; "you must give me my four francs for my apartment, or you must go! Put your sister in the hospital; you should have done it before. You should not have come to live in the house of a poor and honest man, who will have to starve. Yes, mademoiselle, to starve for the want of his four francs lawfully due for his apartment. What is it?" he asks of Marie, who now stands in the doorway.

"The English monsieur," she says, in some excitement; "the strange English monsieur who buys the toads and beetles. He wishes to see you, and he has madame with him."

"I shall attend monsieur," he replies, adding, as he turns to Muriel:

"I have decided, mademoiselle. You must leave, or you must pay me my four francs for my apartment. I shall come up again when I have attended to monsieur."

Goureau leaves the room, and Muriel stands by the bed looking helplessly at the Lady Isola, who tosses wearily upon her hard pillow, and moans feebly with the piteous moan which proceeds from utter physical prostration.

CHAPTER XLV.

Never despair! though sorrows press round us,
While journeying forward on life's rugged way,
Let us ever remember, though cares may surround us,
Life always is darkest ere dawning of day.

None but an acute judge of physiognomy would have recognised in the bland, smiling, benevolent-looking Monsieur Goureau, as he appears to the English lady and gentleman in his shop, the harsh, cruel, grinding landlord of a few minutes before.

Like all Parisian tradesmen, especially of the lower order, he generally drives a flourishing trade on Sunday mornings. This morning he been rather an exception to the rule, but few customers have gladdened his commercial heart, a circumstance which considerably influenced his temper when paying his visit to his two helpless lodgers. Consequently he hails with much delight the advent of the wealthy and eccentric Earl of Bakenholme.

The Countess of Bakenholme accompanies her husband upon this occasion. One of her ladyship's latest fancies is that she thinks she would

like to have an aquarium. Someone, a rival in the fashionable world, has an aquarium, and the Countess of Brakeholme, not to be one whit behindhand, determines upon having one also.

Her good-natured husband is but too willing to indulge her scientific propensities; and enters heart and soul into her project. In pursuance of the aquarium of her desire, he takes her to Monsieur Goureau on this veritable bright Sunday morning, and asks his advice upon the subject.

Monsieur Goureau is delighted at the idea. He is ravished! He assures madame that it has been the one desire of his long and eventful life to meet with a lady with so genuine a love of science as he feels instinctively madame must possess. He promises to do everything possible, and apparently, impossible. Had madame expressed a desire for a moderate sized whale, a lively shark, and a couple of healthy young alligators, it is within the bounds of possibility that Monsieur Goureau would have undertaken to have procured them at the shortest notice.

And now comes the question of terms. The Countess of Brakeholme has had a minute account of Lady Macfad's aquarium and its contents, and she has determined to shine it down with hers. Consequently, she has ordered everything that Lady Macfad has in her aquarium, and many more things that she feels sure her ladyship has never heard of.

But even the liberal and generous Earl of Brakeholme demurs when he hears the exorbitant price demanded by the cunning and avaricious Goureau.

"I had no idea the thing would have been so expensive," says the Earl of Brakeholme, hesitatingly to his wife. "I cannot help thinking that the price is rather exorbitant."

"You understand these things much better, of course, than I do," she replies, smiling sweetly, and speaking amiably to her husband, as she always does when she has a point to gain. "I am willing to leave it all in your hands," she continues, lowering her voice and speaking in a semi-confidential tone. "I shall be glad of the amusement the aquarium is likely to afford me, for I really am becoming weary of gaiety, and shall, I feel, be far more interested in something really instructive and entertaining."

The amiable nobleman is delighted; at the same time he has sufficient common sense to know that Goureau is trying to charge him at least three prices for the things purchased from him. He ventures to say as much to the cheating Goureau, who exclaims:

"Monsieur! you are a rich English milor. I am a poor Frenchman—a poor French merchant. You do good directly with the money you have, and you do the good indirectly, and without knowing it. I ask you a large price for my little fishes, and for my little creeping things; but I do good with the money you will be so generous enough to give me. And you will do good with it, for the money," he continues, mendaciously, "will go to help two English demoiselles, whom I, with the love of a Frenchman's heart for woman in trouble, have taken into my house for charity, when one demoiselle was dying in the street. Ah, monsieur!—madame!—can you have the will to refuse to give a poor French merchant, with a good heart, the price he asks for his little fishes and for his little creeping things?"

His hearers cannot avoid feeling amused as they listen to the poration of the poor French merchant with the good heart. Both are interested, but each from a different motive.

The kind-hearted earl is interested simply because he does not like to hear of anyone in distress without desiring to relieve their necessities. And the Countess of Brakeholme is interested because she is of a crafty, suspicious nature, and it is ever before her mind that she may in some way or other find a clue—in some most unexpected manner—as to the whereabouts of the Lady Isola. Verily, she is a woman who thinks that:

The massive gates of circumstance
Are turned upon the smallest hinge.

"Oh, dear me! Poor things!" exclaims the sympathetic earl. "How kind of you to help them."

"Ah, we must help one another, and be charitable one to the other in this life," says Goureau, piously, rolling up the dirty whites of his eyes; "it grieved my very soul to see these two sweet young creatures in distress. I said: 'Goureau,' I said, 'you have a kind heart. You cannot let these demoiselles be without a home,' so I took them in, and I know I shall be rewarded for it hereafter," and the virtuous Goureau folds his dirty hands and looks cunningly at his customers out of the corners of his little leering eyes.

"It was really a most Christian act of yours, monsieur!" exclaims the countess, almost enthusiastically, "and the poor young girls, are they with you yet?"

"Yes, madame, they are here with me. I have just been to tell them, and to tell them not to want for anything that it is in the power of Goureau to provide for them."

"Perhaps, as you say, they are Englishwomen," says the Earl of Brakeholme, as diffidently as though he were about to commit a crime, instead of to perform one of his customary benevolent actions. "Perhaps you will allow me to do something to help them, as they are our countrywomen? You would like to do so, would you not?" he asks his wife.

"Yes, dear," she replies, sweetly; "but I think, if I may, I should like to see them."

"Just like your kind thoughtfulness!" exclaims the gratified and enamoured earl; "certainly, my dear, you shall see these young women if possible, and try if you can in any way help them."

"Do you not think it would be well?" she asks, with a well assumed and pretty air of humility, "if we were not to say anything of our rank, it might make them awkward?"

As she had fully expected, her husband agrees with her, and the Countess of Brakeholme follows old Marie up the narrow, dark, steep stairs. She thinks she may as well leave no stone unturned in her endeavours to fathom the mystery of the Lady Isola's disappearance.

Goureau, below in the little close-smelling shop, is only half glad to hear the proposal of the countess. He dares not seem to throw any obstacle in her way, and he yet fears that Muriel may tell the whole truth about him. He is in a dilemma, but upon the Earl of Brakeholme paying the whole exorbitant demand, Goureau satisfies his miserly soul by thinking the golden pieces at the bottom of his greasy pocket are sufficient salve for any treachery he may be guilty of, and may be discovered in the perpetration of.

The Countess of Brakeholme enters the little poverty-stricken room, where sits Muriel, her hands clasped upon her knees, and an expression of mute despair upon her white, set face. The countess looked keenly at her, and almost a feeling of disappointment fills her soul.

"I hope you will not consider my presence an intrusion," she says in English, and in her most dulcet tones. "I accidentally heard that you and your sister were in trouble, and as my husband and I are English, we shall be glad to be of any service in our power to two countrywomen."

Muriel stands up, a grateful flush overspreading her face as she listens to the kind words of the stranger.

"Thank you," she replies, with quiet dignity; "my sister, or I should tell you, she is not my sister, only a friend, and I am in very great need of some help, and any you are kind enough to give us will be most welcome."

"I am glad we were fortunate enough to meet with you," says the Countess of Brakeholme, sweetly, "and your friend," looking towards the bed, "she is very ill?"

"Yes, as you see, she is quite unconscious."

Geraldine, Countess of Brakeholme, advances a few steps, and looks upon the worn, fever-stricken face of the Lady Isola!

(To be Continued.)

OVER-SENSITIVENESS.

A GREAT deal of discomfort arises from over-sensitiveness about what people may say of you or your actions. This requires to be blunted. Consider whether anything you do will have much connection with what they will say; and, besides, it may be doubted whether they will say anything about you. Many unhappy persons seem to imagine that they are always in an amphitheatre with the assembled world as spectators; whereas all the while they are playing to empty seats. They fancy, too, they form the particular theme of every passer-by. If, however, they must listen to the imaginary conversation about themselves, they might, at any rate, defy the proverb and insist upon hearing themselves well spoken of.

HER GUIDING STAR;

OR,

LOVE AND TREACHERY.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

CYRIL took Mr. Pelham's hand, pressed it to his lips, and meeting those eyes that seemed to seek his secret thoughts, answered their scrutiny with an expression of such manly confidence, such compassionate tenderness, that he could neither distrust nor fear him.

"The worst is over," Mr. Fairfax whispered. "Return to your charge. Mr. Pelham is mine."

Ernest still slept. The night was far advanced, but Cyril was too deeply moved to sleep. While he reflected with thankfulness that the dreaded interview—for which he had in some degree been prepared—was past, he knew there was much to suffer. He had, indeed, found that for which he had been so long importunate—for which he had wept and prayed.

But there was another side—darker, perhaps, than he feared—full of wrong and wretchedness. There was an innocent sufferer, from whom all was wrenched that he himself gained! What new duties were involved in these strange developments? Was it for him, who, when unknown, had been cared for, instructed, and protected, and to whom rights despaired of had now been restored—was it for him to ask more?

"No," thought he, "her love, too pure to be affected by external changes, shall compensate him for all he has lost! If I yet have influence it shall be used for him."

While Cyril kept his unbroken vigil, Mr. Fairfax devoted himself to Mr. Pelham. He had hurried to the Grove on receiving Cyril's note. The packet on the table had caught his attention.

"It was left," Smart said, "by the gentleman whose conversation had brought on all the trouble."

The truth flashed on Mr. Fairfax—already prepared for it. The communication, so carefully, for the present, averted, had been made by a stranger; ignorant, too, of the nature with which he was dealing. The result did not surprise him.

Mr. Pelham being induced to withdraw to his own room, a fearful scene ensued. A new terror seized him.

"Ernest was not prostrated by an inevitable disease. No, the blow might never have fallen. He himself was his murderer! The victim demanded was his own child—shain by his own hand! The fruit of his body for the sin of his soul!"

Though no two men could be more different, Mr. Fairfax was the person who at this moment could most influence him. His efforts were so far successful that he left Mr. Pelham in some degree composed. His next care was to see Mr. Mason, to inform him of the actual state of things, and to secure his silence, for the reason

that publicity at present could only aggravate the feelings of all.

The morning found Ernest more refreshed and calm than they had dared to hope. But a deep seriousness was on his countenance. He watched everyone who approached; he listened to every sound. He did not attempt to speak, or even to move. He seemed reserving his strength for some definite purpose.

The doctor came. He pronounced everything as favourable as he had expected. This was ambiguous, but no one dared to ask anything more explicit.

Ernest made a sign for a pencil, and, with a slight effort, wrote:

"My father is returned; I must see him."

The doctor hesitated. Ernest perceived it. An impatient frown obscured for an instant the almost deathly calm of his face.

"I must," he wrote, "for one word."

It was no longer opposed, and Mr. Fairfax went to inform Mr. Pelham. They returned together. Mr. Fairfax and the doctor withdrew to the library. Cyril rose to follow them, but a sign from Ernest detained him.

Mr. Pelham, with feelings that no words could adequately convey, approached and leaned over his son. Ernest's calmness seemed something supernatural. Fixing his eye intently on his father's agitated face, his own colourless and quiet almost to sternness, occupied with one idea, he yet uttered no sound. At length his lips moved, and two words passed them:

"My mother?"

"I know what you would ask!" exclaimed his father. "She was as unconscious of wrong to others as to herself. She was pure as the angels to whom she has gone!" A smile, sweet as that of infancy, a glance upcast, expressed the joy and gratitude these words inspired. Looking to Cyril, he said, speaking very low, but with much significance, "You hear; I thought so. I shall die happy."

Then, closing his eyes, he seemed to decline all farther communication. Mr. Pelham was equally unfit for it, and, on the entrance of the doctor, who imposed the most rigorous restrictions, he left the room.

During many succeeding days judicious care and treatment had their proper effect, and the medical opinion was decidedly favourable. All things promised well, and his doctor authorised the confident hope thus inspired.

Cyril had not been to the Elms since the illness of Ernest; but he was now so much better as not to require his presence, even preferring to be alone; he drove over, therefore, to see Mr. Fairfax, with whom he had business.

As he approached the house, he hoped that he should not see Jessie. He asked, accordingly, only for Mr. Fairfax, but a light step on the staircase made him aware that his wish was not granted. Looking up, he perceived her descending. She had not yet seen him. As she came nearer her cheek flushed, her eye brightened, and, with a spring, she was by his side.

"Ah! Mr. Ashleigh," she exclaimed, forgetting the caution which his own reserve and absence rendered unnecessary, "indeed! 'tis long since you were here."

"She has heard," he thought, "that he is doing well. I wish he could see how happy it has made her; it would be his best medicine."

"Yes," he said, "it is, indeed, a long time to be so near, and yet—so—" "far apart," he would have said, but he corrected himself—"and yet unable to see my friends. But we are, as you know, so much relieved about Ernest, that I cannot regret anything."

"Oh, yes! I have heard; 'tis delightful. Yes, yes, he will recover; you may be certain of it," and, in the hopeful temper natural to her, and to encourage Cyril, she continued; "the attack, I understand, was quite accidental; one that might happen to anybody—not at all likely to return again; and then, you know, Nature is always on the side of youth."

He was a little surprised, almost pained, at her manner.

"It was," he thought, "something too easy;" but he repelled the harsh imputation. "Love is stronger than fear," he reflected. "Poor girl, has she never heard that the young die?"

"The doctor, I understand," continues Jessie, "gives every assurance."

"Oh, yes; he justifies all you say. But where is Mr. Fairfax? I came to see him."

"Only to see him? Mamma will not let you go before dinner, I am sure."

But, pleading the necessity of his return, he hurried away.

Having seen Mr. Fairfax, he drove rapidly home. Ernest was not quite so well as he had left him. A little excited, feverish and exhausted.

Cyril's anxious look called for an explanation, and Ernest, with a smile, pointed to a sheet of paper near him. He had been writing.

"Oh, Ernest, how could you?" he said, reproachfully.

He waved his hand to ward off reproach.

"'Tis done," said he, and Cyril was silent.

After a few moments, pointing to the paper, it was handed to him. He folded it, put it into Cyril's hand, and said, with earnestness:

"For you; read it alone."

The restlessness gradually subsided, and he fell into a sleep that it was hoped would entirely remove the effects of his ill-timed exertion. But, though he slept, his face was not calm. Slight contractions of the brow and mouth disturbed it. Sad thoughts seemed flitting over it, and, occasionally, a faint sigh struggled forth.

Cyril remained motionless near him, and, when he awoke, a kind smile acknowledged his care; but it yielded to the same deep seriousness, so marked in the first days of his illness. His eyes were fixed in thought. He seemed unconscious of the presence of anyone. Medicine was brought him; he took it without a question. Food was offered, garnished with savory remarks from Smart; he received it mechanically.

Absorbed in reflections, Cyril was unconscious of time, till a moan from Ernest arrested his attention. Starting up, he went noiselessly into his room and approached the bed, where he trusted to find nothing worse than disturbed sleep.

He beheld, with horror, the life-stream again issuing from his mouth. His face was deadly pale, but perfectly calm. He exerted himself to extend a hand to Cyril, then directed it upward. It fell heavily, and a fresh gush of blood betrayed the effort it had cost him.

His father and the doctor were summoned. The face of the latter confirmed the terrors of Mr. Pelham and Cyril. Ernest alone was serene.

The usual remedies had some effect, but the extreme exhaustion was fearful, and the doctor felt himself compelled to admit to Mr. Pelham his alarm, though with some qualifications.

Ernest more accurately interpreted his condition. He looked first at his father, then at Cyril, and, with an expression evidently intended to remind him of his request, he motioned for his hand. When given, he feebly clasped it, and Cyril, comprehending his wish, seated himself by his side. A gentle inclination of his head signified his satisfaction. His eyes, full of tenderness, were directed alternately to his father and his friend. At length they closed, and he seemed to sleep.

In speechless sorrow they watched the gentle parting, which no suffering aggravated. Mr. Pelham, with eyes fixed, stood motionless, as if stricken by a hand invisible to all but him; while Cyril, with head inclined, whispered words of love that could only be answered from the spirit-land. The feeble, intermitting pulse failed, the low, scarce audible breathing ceased—Ernest was gone!

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

A fortnight had elapsed since Cyril's last visit to the Elms. In the meantime, through Mr. Fairfax, he had learned of Jessie's grief and

dejection, which that gentleman, imputing entirely to a cause which only in part explained it, and misunderstanding the relations that had subsisted between him and Jessie, conceived it well to represent in as strong language as truth would permit.

On the occasion of Cyril's last hasty call, he had made it so evident to Jessie that his only wish was to see Mr. Fairfax, as to pain and surprise her. Pride, however, came to her relief.

"Well," thought she, "if he prefers, for some unexplained reason, to withdraw even his friendship, so be it. He shall see that I regret it as little as himself."

Jessie had been passing the morning with her aunt, when Mr. Fairfax entered with a note from Mr. Pelham. Drawing his wife a little apart, they conversed a few moments in a suppressed tone, Jessie unheeding till the name of Ashleigh fell on her ear, followed by the words: "Goes to Wales in a few days." The matter of the conversation was evidently private; nor could she, if permitted, then have asked a question. Her only resource was to fly; and, shutting herself in her own room, tears that pride could not restrain burst forth.

"Yes," she exclaimed, "he is going, perhaps, for ever, and not a line, not a word of regret, nor even of information. How is he estranged! To Wales! What can take him there? Business of Mr. Pelham's? But no matter. We, his friends, are now nothing; this strange, disagreeable Mr. Pelham everything," added she, petulantly. Then, her frank and generous nature more grieved than offended, she continued: "I could not so treat a friend. Where I had once given my confidence I could not withdraw it without cause."

Susan tapped at the door, and was reluctantly admitted.

"I see a gentleman riding up through the trees, miss. I think it is Mr. Ashleigh."

"Oh," cried Jessie, "I cannot—I will not see him now. 'Tis impossible," she continued, catching a view of her face in an opposite mirror—"impossible!"

Never waiting for second thoughts, Susan, as usual, rushed downstairs, and met Cyril alighting at the door with an inquiry for Miss Farleigh.

A country-bred girl, untrained as yet to the polite qualifications by which those better taught know how to soften the refusal of fashionable dames to shine upon their worshippers, Susan dropped a courtesy, and answered without circumlocution:

"My missis says, sir, she won't come down."

Cyril, with a look of surprise, inquired if she were ill.

"No, sir," replied she, with much composure; "she's very well—only she says she don't want to see you, sir."

"Did she say so?"

"Of course she did, sir," replied the affronted little femme de chambre. "I don't tell stories."

"Don't she see anybody?"

"Yes, sir. All the gentlemen and ladies what come."

"I only, then, am excluded," thought he, and but for the errand on which he came, he would have immediately departed.

Not choosing to trust the accuracy of Susan with a verbal message, he wrote on a card: "My visit is one of necessity; be so good as to see me for a few moments;" and committing this to her, waited in no very patient mood an answer.

Jessie descended, and entered, so calm and cold that, but for the traces of recent tears, she might have seemed incapable of feeling.

Under this exterior, however, Cyril, though mistaking the cause, saw and felt the sorrow, and the momentary pique was gone. Approaching her with a softened though still a constrained manner, he extended his hand; hers trembled, but she permitted him to lead her to a chair, and he took one by her side.

"Forgive me," said he, "if I appear im-

fortunate. I would not obtrude myself on you, but that a sacred duty requires it."

Jessie looked in silence and surprise, inwardly repeating:

"Importunate! obtrude! What language to me!"

"Ernest," he said, "may I not say our Ernest?" and again he paused, with a fixed, inquiring glance, till, feeling herself called on to reply, she said, in a sad but quiet voice:

"Certainly; why should you doubt it?"

Her calmness reassured him; and, taking Ernest's letter from his pocket, he read that portion which related to herself.

She listened without a word; but the varying expression of her truthful face, in which astonishment, pain, and wounded delicacy were reflected, was more eloquent than words.

"This cannot be new to you," said Cyril, in his turn surprised and perplexed. "Your own feelings must have prepared you, in some degree, for a communication so natural under the circumstances. Perhaps there may be somewhat left unsaid at a moment of great bodily weakness—allow me to be more explicit."

And he proceeded to explain the silence of Ernest; to enlarge on the love that had rendered it so difficult; the honour that could alone have enabled him to maintain it. He would have said more, but Jessie, having recovered from the first effect of a revelation so little expected, interrupted him.

"You have discharged your trust. That is enough, so far as you are concerned. For myself I must be allowed a few words. I cannot tell to what extent you may impute inconsistency to me, but my own conscience acquits me. I have never felt, nor intentionally manifested anything for your friend that a sister might not feel for a brother, whose peculiarly delicate nature called for more than common sympathy. My first feeling at this communication, I will own, was displeasure at being thus mistaken and addressed—but it is passed. If the delusion were a happy one to him—whose fate I truly lament—I do not complain. To him it matters not now—and as little to me; for, if the living condemn me, my own heart does not."

Cyril did not attempt a reply. Never had he more deeply felt her truth, dignity, and generosity; but the sentiment could find no expression. No longer restrained by consideration for another—friendship and love no longer conflict—the charge of fickleness and levity which his heart had secretly brought against her now withdrawn—the hope of earlier days would not be denied. Yet the unwinning manner of Jessie repressed all utterance. He tried to speak, but his words were indistinct. And she, little propitiated by his earnest representation of the love of another, rose, and said, coldly:

"From the short conference you requested, your time must be much occupied; pray, do not let me longer detain you."

All the pride of Cyril would, at any other time, have risen at this speech; but now, gentler feelings were in the ascendant.

With increasing agitation, and in a voice tremulous with emotion, while his eye sought the depth of hers, he exclaimed:

"You must not leave me thus—misapprehension shall not part us. Dearest Jessie, may I, dare I open to you a heart that has never ceased to be yours?"

Pride, wounded affection, displeasure, at these few words, fled as by magic. She started, the blood rushed to her cheek; a doubtful look for a moment seemed to repel him; she half-resisted the movement that sought again to reseat her; a word of rebuke was ready to fall from her lips; but they melted into a smile that gave the permission he asked.

As he proceeded, however, it was apparent to her upright mind that he was transgressing the limit they ought to observe, and, rising hastily, she said:

"I can hear no more. I did, indeed, desire to be assured of your friendship. You have satisfied me; I shall never again distrust it. Let us part for the present; it is best."

Cyril, it is hoped, will be forgiven, if he, after the manner of men, seeking to be loved for his own sake, maintained, even at this moment, his incognito.

"Jessie," said he, "you once believed in me, when honour compelled me to be silent; believe me now, when I dare to speak. Your parents, as I know from their own declaration, desire chiefly your happiness; and, if assured that I shall bring you neither poverty nor disgrace, they will not reject me. My present condition warrants this assertion. Others might offer you a more distinguished position, and 'wealth beyond the dream of avarice'; but, if love is better than riches and honour, where is the treasure larger than that which my heart has 'garnered up' for you? Will you cast it from you?"

Her beaming eyes, full of things unutterable, answered for her. Her extended hand grasped in his, pressed to his lips and heart, sealed the compact, while a sweet, low voice was heard to say:

"Your love, and the sanction of my parents, is all I ask."

Ah! Cyril, did not your conscience smite you that you had dared to apply a touch-stone to that true young heart? Or, rather, did not a thrill of joy, exquisite, if selfish, acknowledge this frank avowal that you, without fortune or distinction, unknown and obscure, that you, simply Cyril Ashleigh, were the "star of her destiny?"

What followed in that tête-à-tête may be easily divined—the same review of the past, the same tracing to its first spring in their hearts of that stream which "never did run smooth," the same lingering on moments of bliss, the same explanations of doubts and fears, of circumstances so incomprehensible at the time, yet so easily understood in the light of outspoken affection; those little mysteries which serve to draw still closer the meshes of love—all, in short, that so many have felt, and which, therefore, need not be told.

At length they parted, with many delays, and much "sweet sorrow."

(To be Continued.)

DEATH OF MR. PHELPS.

MR. SAMUEL PHELPS, the distinguished actor, had been ailing for the last six months, but it was only when congestion of the brain made its appearance that much anxiety was occasioned regarding him, and upon a consultation taking place between Sir William Jenner and Dr. De la Cour (Mr. Phelps's medical attendant) but little hopes were entertained of his recovery. The melancholy event took place on Wednesday, November 6, at three o'clock, at Anson's Farm, near Epping. Mr. Phelps was about seventy-two years of age, and leaves behind him two daughters and one son, his other son having died very suddenly at Edinburgh.

Mr. Phelps was a native of Devonport, and was born in 1806. He was apprenticed to a printer; but the bent of his mind lay in another direction. His first appearance on the stage was made about fifty years ago at the York Theatre. "Who is the young man who played Tubal to-night?" asked the great Edmund Kean after impersonating Shylock at a provincial theatre soon afterwards, "Samuel Phelps, sir." "Please send him to me." The young actor, fearing that he was about to be reprimanded for some grievous defect in his performance, went to the tragedian's dressing-room in some trepidation. "Mr. Phelps," said Kean, clapping him cordially on the shoulders, "you have played Tubal very, very well; persevere, and you'll make a name." Mr. Phelps took the advice, and in course of time achieved so much reputation that in 1837 he was brought to the Haymarket to play leading characters.

His début before a London audience was in the character of Shylock, at that house, under the management of Mr. Webster. His performance was favourably received; nor was his

next essay in the arduous part of Hamlet less successful. In the same year, when the management of Covent Garden Theatre was undertaken by Mr. Macready, Mr. Phelps was engaged as one of the leading performers. In 1851, at the public entertainment given to Mr. Macready on his retirement from the stage, he pointed to Mr. Phelps as the most promising, if not the most accomplished Shakesperian performer of the day. In 1844 Mr. Phelps appeared in a new part—that of manager of Sadler's Well's Theatre.

One of his chief objects was to restore the popularity of the legitimate drama, then at a very low ebb; and in this experiment he was completely successful—a result partly attributable to his own excellent acting. He subsequently was engaged by Mr. Fechter at the Lyceum, and afterwards at Drury Lane Theatre, where he was the mainstay of the management. Mr. Phelps has also edited an edition of Shakespeare's plays. His leading characteristics as an actor, both in tragedy and comedy, were a scrupulous adherence to the meaning of the author, and a fine elocution, combined with a careful regard to the archaeological requirements of the mise en scène.

THE

BARONESS OF THE ISLES.

CHAPTER IX.

FOR a moment the grim words of King Reginald appalled the inmates of the castle—but for a moment only. Death or surrender!

These were the alternatives offered by the king.

And these were emphasised by the presence of the body of soldiers shutting off all retreat by land, and by the appearance of the fleet of fifty sail that glided into view along the bay. Death or surrender!

The castellan, who had mounted the battlements with Ivar, looked to his young mistress for her commands.

She, youthful and fair and tender, flushed to her sweet brows with a look of pride and heroism, and her voice rang clear and free as she exclaimed:

"The daughter of Godred can die, but she can never surrender! The king has descended from his high position to oppress a subject. His commands are no longer to be heeded. And so long as he proceeds in this iniquitous path I will resist him as resolutely as I would an outlaw or a robber!"

The grey old castellan, with kindling eyes and glowing face, repeated the words in a great shout in answer to the king. Before Reginald could respond, a wild, approving yell went up from the throat of every man within the beleaguered castle!

Higher than their duty to their king they held their allegiance to their young mistress. Most of those stern and warlike men had served under Godred, and to their care and loyalty Godred had bequeathed his daughter. Before they would see her forced into an unwilling marriage, even with a king, they would perish, one and all, in her defence!

Reginald was stung to fury by the castellan's reply, and by the approval it elicited from the defenders of Matilda.

"You are traitors all!" the king shouted angrily. "Traitors to your king and country! And as traitors, unless you surrender, you shall be punished!"

No response was made to this menace. After a brief silence the trumpet again pealed, and the hostile troops went into bivouac before the very walls of the castle.

The night was mild and pleasant. Through all the long hours before the dawn the king's soldiers were silent, encamped around the landward side of the castle, apparently wrapped in slumbers.

The castle, too, was silent as death, its defenders all seeming profoundly asleep.

But sentinels in camp and castle kept keen watch through those weary hours, relieving each other at frequent intervals.

There was no possibility that Reginald could surprise the defenders of Matilda, and equally no possibility that the lovers could escape through the cordon he had established around them.

As soon as the enemy had bivouacked for the night, and sentinels had been established upon the battlements, the Lady Matilda, with her aunt and ladies, and attended by Ivar and the castellan, descended into the rooms below.

Here they held a consultation.

"We are hemmed in by sea and land," said the castellan. "Escape by boat or by horse is impossible."

"Were I the only object of the king's assault," said Ivar, "I would make my escape and so leave you unmenaced; or, if it were necessary, I would even surrender. But I am only a pretext for his attack. His real object is to capture the Lady Matilda and compel her to become his wife."

This explanation received credence. Neither Matilda nor Ivar had the faintest idea of the new terrors and suspicions which the king had conceived against the young knight.

They could not guess that the monarch had a double cause of hatred against Ivar, and that, if Reginald's suspicions had basis of truth, Ivar stood in the way alike of his love and his ambition—that he believed Ivar to possess the right possibly to his royal throne as well as to the hand of the Lady Matilda.

Believing and suspecting thus, the king would never pause now until Ivar should lie dead and powerless at his feet.

An awful hatred had sprung up in Reginald's breast against the unconscious knight. And hatred and baffled love together made Reginald more to be feared than the most blood-thirsty tiger of the jungle.

But as the lovers could not know all this, they reasoned that a desire to possess Matilda was the chief motive of the king's enmity to Ivar, and the knight deemed his protection necessary to the lady of his love.

"We cannot fly," said Matilda, bravely, "but except as a last alternative. But we can fight. This old castle has stood many a fierce assault. These men of ours are hardened and skilled in defence. Only last year a horde of Norwegian pirates landed in our bay in the night and made attack upon us. You have heard how we repulsed them, Ivar, and how they left certain of their dead within our moat? What we did then against Norwegians we can do again against our king."

"Reginald will do nothing until the morning," said Ivar. "You should retire, Lady Godiva, and you also, Lady Matilda, that you may be fresh in the morning."

The venerable Lady Godiva approved this advice and acted upon it. Lady Matilda, with a few last words to the castellan, and a whispered good-night to Ivar, retired also with her ladies.

The bower chamber of the young owner of the castle was a pretty and, for the time, softly luxurious room, with wide divans and yielding cushions, and hangings of embroidered tapestry,—a chamber fit for maiden's dreamings.

An alcove, shut off by silken hangings, contained the bed, and a closet near concealed the toilet appointments.

The Lady Godiva's apartment communicated with Matilda's and beyond were the rooms of Matilda's maids—all ladies born.

Having attended her aged relative to her couch, Matilda dismissed her attendants and entered her own room.

She had expected to lie awake for hours, but scarcely had her head touched her pillow when her previous night's sleepiness and her day's fatigues pressed heavily upon her, and she sank to sleep.

She was awakened by a trumpet blast that seemed to curdle the startled air.

Springing from her bed she ran to a window and looked out.

The day had dawned, and in the morning grey the besiegers' camp was seen to be astir. Troops were forming into line, and mounted officers were riding rapidly up and down the columns, giving orders in loud, quick voices of command.

The maiden hastened to attire herself, and then proceeded to the room of the Lady Godiva.

The venerable lady was risen and dressed, her attendants around her.

Lady Matilda and her aged relative descended to the great dining-hall, where they found the household assembled.

The ladies were greeted with cheers and enthusiasm.

The guards and retainers were all in armour, and all eager for the conflict. Ivar approached Matilda and conducted her to her seat at the head of the table.

Breakfast—a heartier repast even than usual—and consisting of cold meats and pasties, ales and mead and wine, of bread and cakes in abundance, was eaten, while the occasional blast of a trumpet came from the enemy's camp, and the clash of arms resounded in the great courtyard of the castle, where a half-dozen men were on guard.

After breakfast the castellan made a brief speech to the eager throng of retainers, stating that the safety of Castle Grand and of Godred's daughter alike depended on their faithfulness and valour.

Ivar made a short address, and finally Matilda spoke, enjoining her retainers to prove themselves worthy of her trust in them, and telling them that her very life depended upon them.

The men listened to these speeches in respectful silence, and responded to them with enthusiastic cheers.

Then they departed to their posts, and Matilda and her aunt and ladies ascended to a safe place upon the battlements to watch the conflict that must soon ensue.

The sun arose, and it seemed as if its rising were the signal for which all had waited, for with the first red lance of light upon the grey old castle towers, the king's herald rode up to the very edge of the moat and blew a long trumpet-blast that waked the mountain-echoes.

An answering blast came from the castle.

Then the herald in stentorian voice proclaimed his errand.

"His most gracious majesty, King Reginald, demands the surrender of the false knight and traitor Ivar, who hath been exiled for his treason, and forbidden to return to Man under penalty of death!"

The voice of the castellan replied in tones equally sonorous:

"We deny that Ivar is a traitor. We demand for him a fair trial before the deemsters. If the king will guarantee safety to the Lady Matilda and a fair trial before the deemsters to the knight Ivar, then shall our gates open to his majesty, and we ourselves do homage to King Reginald!"

A brief consultation took place in the camp of the besiegers.

Then the king's herald cried aloud:

"The king will make no compact with traitors. His majesty demands the unconditional surrender of the castle!"

The reply of the castellan was prompt:

"When the king comes to Castle Grand as a friend, its doors are ever open to his majesty. But when he comes with hostile troops upon an unjust errand, we must defend ourselves as from an enemy!"

"You refuse to open to the king?"

"We refuse to open to the king while the king appears as an enemy!" was the firm response.

The king and his counsellors consulted again together. Reginald was furious in his anger. Baffled love and baffled hate made him reckless, and he ordered his troops to begin the assault.

The draw-bridge had been raised and the wide moat stretched between besieger and besieged, a formidable and seemingly impassable barrier.

There were none of the appliances in those days which now make war so terrible—no guns and shells and fearful enginery which mow down men in ranks of battle as a reaper mows the yellow wheat.

The simple weapons of the time required hand-to-hand conflict.

In the hurling of missiles, the guardians of the castle possessed all advantage. Sheltered behind their great and massive walls they could laugh at the exertions of the enemy, and at their own pleasure hurl forth the rude agents of destruction and death.

The king therefore ordered a portion of his force to concentrate their energies upon the portcullis, another portion to attempt a breach in the walls, and the remainder to hold the camp and be in readiness for orders.

Encumbered with armour, the king's men found the problem of how to cross the moat one exceedingly difficult of solution.

Reginald was compelled, therefore, to govern his impatience and to await a more favourable opportunity to carry out his plans of assault.

The royal troops returned to their camp. No token of hostilities was offered by them throughout the day.

The lookouts from the castle reported various diversions in the hostile camp, contests of running, leaping, and wrestling, innocent games with which to while away the hours.

Reginald was seen riding to and fro, messengers were coming and going from his presence, and under all the apparent jollity and merry-making ran an undertone of serious and earnest preparations of conflict.

It is needless to say that the besieged were upon their guard, vigilant and watchful of every movement of the enemy.

And so the long day wore away.

The night came on dark and rainy, a drizzling mist filling the air and falling like a wet and heavy veil around the beleaguered castle.

The troops encamped upon the rocks and cliffs, and the stretch of level plain was hidden from the view of the keenest-eyed lookout upon the battlements.

The fleet of vessels in the bay was wrapped in the thick, dark mist—blotted out from sight in the gloom.

"They will make their attack to-night," said Ivar to the Lady Matilda, as, closely wrapped, they walked together upon the battlements in the grim darkness. "The night seems made on purpose for them!"

Soon after the darkness fell the king received reinforcements, which he had ordered on his departure from Castle Rushen to follow him without delay.

These reinforcements, hampered with heavy burdens, had set out upon the previous afternoon, had halted for the night upon the way, and had resumed their journey in the morning, doing every step of the march at a walk. They were heavily encumbered and had been obliged to halt frequently to allow men and beasts to rest, but they had arrived at last, and their coming was opportune.

They had brought with them all the heavier enginery of war known to those rude days—battering-rams, pontoon-bridges, and similar contrivances—and all well adapted for the purposes in hand.

Certain of the troops, laying aside their armour, swam the moat in a dead silence, and gained a footing under the very walls of the castle.

This movement was unsuspected by the sentinels of the castle, the fall of the drizzling rain, and the dashing of the waves upon the beach in a sullen, ceaseless roar masking all lesser sounds.

The pontoon-bridges were secured and the troops swarmed over them.

And now the tramping of many feet penetrated to the ears of the besieged. There was a breathless silence upon the part of Ivar and

the castle-guards, and then a ball of some combustible material was projected and came whizzing through the air—a veritable blazing ball of fire—and fell in the midst of the besiegers.

The red flames leaped up, and in the lurid glare Matilda's allies beheld the enemy under their very wall, bristling and terrible, a grim and awful phalanx bent upon destruction.

A shower of missiles fell upon the besiegers. In the midst of the confusion, the steady strokes of the battering-ram as it beat against the portcullis was heard.

All was now excitement within the castle walls.

Other balls of fire came hurtling down into the midst of the enemy; other showers of missiles descended upon the besiegers. Soldiers, clad in heavy armour, reeled under the shock of these assaults, and a dozen of them went toppling over into the moat, and, encumbered with their coats of steel, went like stones to the bottom.

The king remained at the camp and watched the progress of events.

The battering-ram, terrible as it was, was, after all, but a cover to a design more likely to succeed.

The portcullis of wrought iron was able to withstand a long assault without giving way. The defenders of the castle congregated above this point of attack and poured down their missiles and greatly hindered the assault.

But while they were thus engaged a formidable body of King Reginald's troops were employed with scaling ladders at a little distance. And in the very moment when the defenders of the castle succeeded in driving back the soldiers at the gates, a great cry went up from the king's men at the ladders, and they swarmed up upon the walls and over into the castle court-yard—a savage horde, yelling and triumphing with their beginning of victory!

(To be Continued.)

PUBLIC AMUSEMENTS.

THE DRAMA.

DRURY LANE THEATRE.

In resuming our notices of theatrical, musical, and other recreative entertainments, we must, in right of seniority, place "Old Drury" first on the list. At the present ante-Christmas interval, Mr. Chatterton's "leading tragedian" is Mr. Charles Dillon, who, after enacting Shakesperian heroes, Macbeth and Othello being his latest personations, on Saturday resumed his role of Belphegor, by many of his admirers pronounced to be his masterpiece. "Belphegor" is preceded by Colman's admirable comedy "The Jealous Wife," compressed into three acts, and few will dispute that the play gains by the compression. The realism and intense individuality thrown by Mrs. Hermann Vezin into the leading character, Mrs. Oakley, and the self-inflicted tortures of "the green-eyed monster," cherished and fed by the victim of jealousy, were so intense and spontaneous that we might look in vain for a rival to Mrs. Vezin as the heroine of this curious old comedy. The cast, too, had the aid of Mr. Ryder and Mr. J. C. Cowper, the former an excellent Major Oakley, and the latter an efficient representative of the misconstrued husband.

We certainly must commend Mr. Charles Dillon's judgment in the revival of the forcible and picturesque melodrama in which he assumes the title-role. The careless indifference and freedom of the light-hearted mountebank, the fierce rage and deep despair of the heretofore husband, the nervous and trembling dread of the loving father, when he fears for the loss of his boy—the last of the family that once shared his joys and his trials—enriched the sympathies of a crowded audience. Mr. Dillon was called

at each descent of the drop-scene, and at the final fall of the curtain was hailed with the heartiest applause. Miss Wallis, to whom was allotted the part of Madeline, was attractive and womanly in the earlier scenes, and rose, as the play progressed, to the stronger situations to power and spirit-moving pathos. The Duke de Montbazon found in Mr. Cooper a careful and efficient representative, as did the character of La Varennes in Mr. Russell. Mr. Calhaem's Fanfaronnade was a pleasant relief to the more serious mental agonies of the hero. The Henri of Miss Longdale was engaging, and the kind-hearted danseuse Zephyrina, Miss Hudspeth, materially aided a meritorious cast. "Belphegor" will sustain repeated representations in the fast-diminishing interval of acting nights which lie between the present and the time-honoured Christmas celebrations for which "Old Drury" yet sustains its ancient fame and precedence. Mr. Chatterton's programme appeals to audiences of different tastes, and affords an apt illustration of the oft-quoted couplet:

The drama's laws the drama's patrons give,
And those who live to please, must please, to live.

GAIETY THEATRE.

AUBREY'S picturesque opera "Fra Diavolo," a cherished favourite of our earlier days, has, for a second time, been the theme of a lively burlesque by the most brilliant and most industrious parodist of the stage, Mr. H. J. Byron. Twenty years ago Mr. Byron tried his "prentice hand" on "Fra Diavolo; or, the Beauty and the Brigands," at the Strand Theatre. He now presents us with "Young Fra Diavolo, the Terror of Terracina" at the Gaiety. The promise of the youthful pun-wright is fully verified, and his now practised hand shows the master-craftsman. Even Polonius might commend it, as "brevity's the soul of art," for condensing the three acts of the familiar opera into three scenes, the result of which is a brief and bright quintessence of the "fun of the fair," which devolves on Miss E. Farren as the Young Fra Diavolo, ably seconded by Miss Kate Vaughan as Zerlina, the beauty of Terracina. Lord and Lady Alcahaz, herein aliased as Sir Simpleton Simon and Lady Simon, are laughably personated by Mr. T. Squire and Miss Amalia. Of course the two comic scoundrels, Beppo and Giacomo, are yet more exaggerated in their original comicality by Edward Terry and E. W. Royce, whose drolleries defy verbal description. Mr. C. Fawcett does distracted duty as the detective under-head Lorezzo, the carabineer, while our old friend, the able stage-manager, Robert Soutar, recalled in his bewildered inaptitude as chief of the detective police, the puzzled perplexity of the late Bob Keeley in his drollest of stage dilemmas. We may safely say—indeed, it goes without saying, that dressing, grouping, and mise-en-scène at the Gaiety are all perfect in their way. The music, adapted by Herr Meyer Lutz, showed a tasteful and appreciative mastery of that department. The curtain fell amidst hearty and spontaneous applause. The author was called, and Miss E. Farren and Mr. E. Terry were similarly greeted. We must not omit to note that the burlesque was preceded by a capital performance of Poole's evergreen, "Paul Pry," in which the pertinaciously inquisitive Paul was donned by Mr. Terry. Miss Kate Fowler embodied the intriguing Phoebe, Mrs. Leigh as Mrs. Subtle, Miss Wadman as Eliza, Mr. Maclean as Colonel Hardy, and Mr. R. Soutar as Grasp, ensured a most satisfactory representation of the old and favourite comedy.

SURREY THEATRE.

On Saturday morning the "People's caterer," as Mr. William Holland delights to style himself, presented his patrons with a "new and original" one-act drama from the pen of the popular Henry Pettitt. It bears the attractive title, "An Honest Man," and in smart dialogue and construction will add to the reputation of its author.

MUSIC.

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE.

THE extended and still extending taste among the people for the higher order of musical entertainment is fully proved by the phenomenon of a successful opera season in midwinter at Her Majesty's Theatre at play-house prices. Bizet's new opera "Carmen," "Marta," "Il Trovatore," "La Traviata," with a new prima donna, Mdlle. Ambie, have been successively and successfully presented. Of "Carmen" we may hereafter speak. As a specimen of the class of artists and music provided at this unoperatic time of year we will take Flotow's "Marta," as represented on Monday. Here we had Mdlle. Marimon, than whom there is no better representative of the masquerading maid-of-honour, Lady Henrietta, on the Italian stage, while Madame Trabelli-Bettini challenged and silenced comparison by her singing and acting the coquetish Nancy. Lionello found a competent representative in M. Carrión, who was encased in the lachrymose "M'appari" as, of course, was Mdlle. Marimon in the "Last Rose of Summer" in its Italian dress. Herr Behrens, despite the absurdity of his "get up" as Plumkett, was effective, and applauded in his "beer song," which, as also the Spinning-Wheel quartet, was redemanded. Signor Zoboli was a grotesque Lord Tristano, and the whole opera went admirably.

ALHAMBRA THEATRE.

THIS home of opera bouffe and ballet is now occupied by Miss Emily Soldene and her talented corps. The undoubted chief of light music maestri, Offenbach, is also in the ascendant, and "La Perichole" is the pièce de résistance, and a capital piece too. Miss Emily Soldene may be summed up in the slang phrase as "awfully jolly" in the chief part, and unlike Schneider, whom we have seen in the part, is rather nice than naughty. Mr. Knight Aston is a pleasant tenor, and sings like a musician—no mean credit in these days. The band is capital and goes well together, and there is a ballet in the second act that sustains the eminence which all must yield to the Alhambra in this specialty of the modern stage.

A NEW THEATRE.—The site has been purchased, and the plans approved for the erection of a new theatre in Aldersgate Street, in the vicinity of the Aldersgate Station.

THE Holborn Amphitheatre has been reopened with an entertainment of an instructive and improving character. Mr. Hamilton, whose splendid diorama of "Excursions to America," is truly a scenic, realistic, dramatic, and pictorial treat, has reproduced it with such an enlivening accompaniment of songs, choruses, dances, skatings, sledgings, funny stories, and serious elucidations, that we would advise all who would blend recreation with valuable knowledge, to take a seat in the Holborn Amphitheatre at one of Mr. Hamilton's "At Homes."

THE Princess's Theatre is closed until the 30th. "Uncle Tom's Cabin" has been removed to Berlin with all the niggers and plantation "properties" of Messrs. Jarrett and Fawner.

MISS VIRGINIA BLACKWOOD took her benefit on Monday at Astley's Amphitheatre, the bon-façon impersonating Lady Audley in the dramatised version of Miss Bradton's novel. She afterwards played Jessie Brown in the "Siege of Lucknow."

WITHIN the last few days it has been finally determined that the works at the new opera-house on the Thames Embankment, which have been at a stand for more than two years, are to be actively resumed.

THE excellent Saturday evening concerts, under the management of Mr. Austin, at the St. James's Hall, minister to a want for legitimate musical entertainment at a moderate charge, to those who would rationally enjoy their Saturday's half-holiday.



[A TENDER HEART.]

"FRED'S WIFE."

"Don't talk about it any more, my dear; it can't be. You and Fred had best set to work to forget each other. Heaven knows I'm sorry for your disappointment, but, after all, it isn't to be wondered at that your uncle Elliot should have formed high views for his son and heir. Take my advice and never let him know that it is you whom Fred would have chosen; he is a hard, stern man, and it might make him your enemy. When I am gone you'll need friends, poor child! alone and almost penniless in the wide world."

The invalid gentleman put out a delicate hand and stroked the sunny hair of his pretty daughter as she knelt beside him; a long and bitter sigh broke from his lips.

"As to your marrying without his consent, as Fred proposed the other day, that is quite out of the question. Fred is dependent upon his father, of course, and as when I die—it won't be long, Amy, I feel worse than ever to day—when I die my annuity dies with me, there will be nothing for you. And Fred has never been taught to do one thing that could support himself, much less a wife and family. No, no; if my brother-in-law had chosen I would have given you to your cousin gladly, though he is rather a wild fellow, I fear; but without his consent it would be madness—madness."

Mr. Rivers sank back in his invalid's chair, overcome by the exertion of so long a speech,

and Amy, seeing his condition, forbore to urge him further; and indeed, as she shortly afterwards remarked to Fred, what was there to be gained by doing so?

"Poor papa can't help us. If he could he would very gladly. It would please him that I should be your wife. But that's hopeless,"—weeping silently—"since uncle has set his heart upon another daughter-in-law. You didn't tell him it was I you loved, did you, Fred?"

"He didn't give me a chance. He is such an arbitrary fellow, is my father! The best fellow in the world, you know, at heart; but wants to have everything his own way. 'Don't talk to me of another woman, sir,' says he. 'You'll marry the girl I choose for you, or I'll cut you off with a shilling! Leave the room, and don't come into my presence again until you are prepared to obey me.' That was yesterday; and I haven't troubled him since."

"And what will you do now, Fred?"

"I'll tell you, my darling; I have a plan that will put an end to all our trouble and my father's opposition at the same time. I can't obey him, Amy; he has no right to embitter all my life, and yours, too, for the gratification of his own ambition. We have loved each other from childhood; why didn't he foresee all this and not throw us so much together, if nothing was to come of it? And he is fond of you too. I firmly believe that if we were once married, so that it couldn't be helped, he'd pardon us and make the best of it. I propose that we get

married privately at once—yes, this very day."

Amy didn't answer a word. She looked at him with lovely, half-frightened eyes, while he poured forth a perfectly bewildering torrent of reasons, arguments, persuasions, and entreaties.

"But my father?" she said, at last, when he gave her a chance to speak. "He would never consent to such a thing."

"We won't ask him, darling; we won't tell a single soul. Why worry your sick father? We know he wished us to be man and wife. As to my father, he is a most philosophical individual, and will probably apply his favourite maxim to our case—'what can't be cured must be endured.' You cannot think it right that I should obey him by making that old maid, Miss Staines, my wife, while my whole heart is yours."

She did not think so; nor was it in nature that she should, poor child.

"No, it can't be right for you to do that, Fred," she said, timidly.

"Of course not. My father is rich enough; why is he so avaricious? The course I have suggested will be best for us all—father included. You will marry me to-day, my darling, won't you?"

She loved him dearly. She had loved him all her life, and to think of him as the husband of another was more than she could bear. Her few faint objections were easily overruled, and as Fred had come prepared to have his own way, and had made all the necessary preparations, together they repaired to a quiet country-place close at hand, and there took the vows that bound them to each other "till death doth part."

It was evening when Amy reached her home, after an absence of about eight hours—a most unusual length of time for her to remain away from her sick father. Her anxieties were all for him now.

"How he will wonder what has detained me. I shall have to tell him all, Fred, if he questions me."

Fred was quite willing. "Just as you think best," said he. Only tell him to keep it secret; let me be the one to tell my father. Good night, precious little wife, since you won't let me come in with you."

He kissed her and put her out of the carriage and drove away, leaving her standing at the door, looking after him for a moment, the happiest little woman in the world, in her own estimation, in spite of her present anxiety.

Then she turned and rang the bell. The door was opened hastily. A familiar face looked out upon her, white and scared. It was her landlady.

"Oh, Miss Amy, is it you at last? Where have you been. We've been sending all over for you! Your poor father—"

The woman stopped and hesitated. Amy had entered and stood looking in her face, her own features blanched with sudden terror.

"Yes, yes—my father? What of him? Is he worse?"

"He is—dead, miss."

With a scream of horror the poor girl fell fainting—wedded and orphaned almost in the self-same hour.

He had died in his chair almost without a struggle.

An invalid this long, long time, she had been told that he might go suddenly; but she had never realised it in the least.

And now that the summons should come during her absence, that she should have had no parting kiss, no farewell word of blessing—oh! it made that sad bereavement doubly hard to bear.

Her uncle Elliot was very, very kind. He attended in person to all the necessary arrangements, and when the funeral was over, took her to his own home.

"Fred's company will cheer you, and you shall be as a daughter to me, my dear," he said, as she sat in the carriage beside him. She laid her head upon his breast and wept—oh, how

bitterly! reflecting upon how she was his daughter indeed, and dared not tell him so.

The question of Fred's marriage with the heiress, Miss Staines, had been forgotten in the shock of Mr. Rivers's sudden death. Mr. Elliot appeared to have restored his rebellious son to favour, and no more was said about the matter for several weeks.

Happy weeks were these to the secretly wedded lovers—happy to Amy even in spite of her grief.

Fred was so ardent, so devoted, and she loved him so.

No one interfered with, or took any particular notice of, their proceedings—they were cousins, and had been life-long friends and playfellows; their mutual pleasure in each other's company was natural.

No one saw anything strange in it in the least.

But this could not last. Very soon Mr. Elliot returned to the attack, demanding that his son should propose to Miss Staines immediately. Fred refused.

They were alone, and angry words ran high between them.

"What you desire is impossible now," cried Fred—"impossible! The law allows a man but one wife at a time, and I have one already."

He arose as he spoke those decisive words, and looked his father resolutely in the face. Mr. Elliot rose too, pale with fury.

"Is this a jest?" he demanded, hoarsely.

"No jest," answered Fred, respectfully, but firmly, although he trembled too. "I have been married now two months. My wife—I hope you will not feel so bitterly, father, when you learn that my wife is—"

"Silence!" His father's voice, interrupting him, was so hoarse and strained, so changed with deep and violent emotion, that he started at the sound. "I refuse to hear her name. I refuse to recognise her existence. Never shall her feet cross my threshold—never! I have no longer a son. Leave this house, sir! leave at once and for ever!"

Fred walked quietly to the door; reaching it, he turned and addressed his father:

"Hear me but a few words, sir. You have refused to hear my wife's name; so be it. I see no reason to force the information upon you. Some day you may desire to learn it. I would have obeyed all your reasonable commands, as I have ever done, but this matter involved the happiness of two lives, and I have taken it into my own hands. I shall go forth into the world and earn my own bread, as a man should."

"I do not reproach you that you, having reared me in idleness and in the expectation of being your heir, have now turned me adrift upon the world; but some day perhaps your own conscience may do so. At such a time you will be glad to know that I have still a portion of my last quarter's allowance left, amounting to twenty pounds. It is not much to start in life with; but it shall do. I tell you this in no spirit of defiance, but for your comfort hereafter. Farewell, sir. Take care of my cousin Amy, and Heaven bless you, sir."

And he was gone—gone to break the news to Amy, and to entreat her to keep their secret yet awhile.

"He has no suspicion, and I am sure that to discover now that you—you to whom he has been so kind—have also sinned against him, would make the blow still harder for him to bear. Remain with him, and comfort him, and gain a place in his heart; who knows but you may yet win him to forgive us. And let me know that my wife is safe and well provided for, while I am striving to make a home for her."

"The thought that you might ever want would take the courage out of me. You promised me once to keep our secret until I gave you leave to speak. Give me that promise anew, Amy."

She did so—promising never to divulge the secret of her marriage until her husband gave her leave.

So Fred Elliot was banished from his father's house, because he had married a wife; and left that wife, all unknown and unsuspected, to change and soften his father's heart.

The first time that she ventured to speak of Fred her uncle silenced her most peremptorily.

"I forbid you to name him in my presence. Let that subject be avoided between us, once and for all. If you are dutiful you shall supply his place; as I will endeavour to fill your father's; but never speak that name."

She obeyed with a heavy heart; there was no choice for her but to obey, at present. Her uncle grew much attached to her. Secretly and silently he grieved sorely for his only son, and inwardly anathematised the ambitious pride that had led to their estrangement, though outwardly he appeared hard and cold. His hair, that had been as black as jet, turned grey, and a worn and anxious look became habitual with him.

To Amy he turned for comfort in his heart's hidden and unspoken desolation.

She was his sweet and patient companion always; reading, playing, singing to him—Fred's favourite airs and songs; it was the only way in which she dared plead for him and tenderly recall him to his father's heart. She took charge of his home comforts too, as they had not been cared for since his wife died long ago.

Both uncle and niece shrank from society, but in the house, and in long solitary walks and drives, they were almost inseparable.

One day he said to her:

"You are a daughter to me, indeed. I shall leave all my wealth to you."

She shrank away, and cried out at that—off her guard for a minute:

"Oh, no, no, no! I could not accept it. It is—it belongs to—another!" And then stood trembling, with her eyes cast down.

Mr. Elliot frowned heavily.

"It belongs to me, to do with as I will; and I choose to give it to you, not to—one who has disgraced me."

She gathered courage.

With crimson face and heaving bosom and tearful eyes, she cried:

"Oh, do not say so, uncle! Fred will never disgrace you; he is too good, too noble."

He interrupted her:

"Do you know what his goodness and nobleness has brought him to? I know he writes to you sometimes. He is—my son is—at work as bookkeeper in a factory in Manchester, at a salary of two pounds per week. How long do you think it will be before he can support his wife on that?" Then pausing suddenly as he marked her glowing cheeks and troubled, heaving breast a thought occurred to him. He uttered an exclamation of comprehension and regret, and putting his arm around her, drew her towards him.

"Amy, my child, did you know that Fred was married?"

Her heart beat until it nearly stifled her. What question would come next?

"Yes, uncle," she faltered, with white, trembling lips.

He noted her emotion and mistook its cause. Filled with a great regret and pity, he drew her to his breast, so that she hid her face against his shoulder.

"My child, my own, sweet girl, be candid with me; speak to me as you would to your own father. Did you love Fred with more than a cousin's love?"

The question was so unexpected, so altogether different from what she had dreaded, that it took her by surprise.

All her love for her young husband, all her grief for his long absence, (he had been gone six months,) the painful thought that she had driven him from his home—these, and another keen anxiety that gnawed her heart in silence, overcame her now, and found utterance in the cry that left her lips.

"I loved him better than my life—better than my life!" she cried, and she fell weeping on her uncle's breast.

He caressed and soothed her.

"Alas!" he cried. "If he had only married you, how happy we might all have been!"

She raised her head—a look of delighted surprise upon her face.

"Would you have consented to that?" she cried.

"My child, can you doubt it?"

Her hand flew to her bosom; then she paused.

"No, no, I must not—my promise—my oath," she murmured, and raised her hand to her brow with a bewildered look: "and yet to be so near happiness—and not—not seize upon it!" her voice died suddenly; the agitation had been too great—she lay senseless in Mr. Elliot's arms.

This did not much surprise him; she had been far from well of late, causing him much anxiety.

He laid her on a couch, and ringing the bell for help, proceeded to unfasten her dress at the neck to give her air. A paper fell from her bosom.

He picked it up, opened it—a marriage certificate!

Amy's secret was a secret no longer.

That afternoon a message flashed its way across the wires to a certain inland town:

"Come home. Your wife is far from well and wishes to see you immediately. So do I."

"Your father, JOHN ELLIOT."

One day later all sorrow was at an end, and they were happily re-united.

"As for my money," said Mr. Elliot, patting his daughter-in-law's little white hand, "I shall give it to neither of you. The baby shall be my heir, when it arrives, and you shall be trustees and guardians."

He kept his word, establishing Fred, at his earnest wish, in business.

They all lived together, a truly happy and united family, and it would probably have been difficult for the old gentleman himself to have told which he loved the best—Fred, Fred's baby—which arrived in due time, or Fred's little, gentle wife.

C. M. S.

LITTLE WOMEN.

It may be frankly averred that the self-assertion of many a little woman is delightful neither to her husband nor to anyone else. She may not snap and snarl at you as she does at him, and she may not insinuate that you are an idiot as she might do if you were mated to her, but she will probably approach you with more or less of a defiant air. As she draws nigh unto your presence she will perk up her head, just as if she desired to sniff the pure atmosphere or to show her contempt for everything beneath a height from the ground of some four feet. Then she will strut, rather than walk, and talk in the loudest of voices, as if her intention was to convey to you the impression, "you see that I am small, but I am not defenceless, and if you imagine I will submit to be imposed upon you are much mistaken."

When you get into conversation with her you discover that she is very loquacious and a very learned party—in her own opinion—and you discover also that you must mind your p's and q's when you are confronted by her. She will often contradict you upon the least possible provocation. Indeed she will often contradict you upon no provocation at all, and she will do so in a way that is calculated to make you feel as small mentally as she is physically. She will artfully endeavour to entrap you into all sorts of discussions on matters which you don't understand and she does, or imagines that she does, in order that she may be enabled to turn on you and rend you.

Indeed, if there is one subject upon which you are in a state of the most helpless ignorance, and she has the smallest idea as to what that awful subject is, you may depend that she will take a delight in bringing it up for discussion, and that she will experience a thrill of almost fiendish joy if she can succeed in putting you

into a corner. Yet, under favourable circumstances, she is able to be agreeable after a fashion. There is a certain brilliancy of thought and action about her which is not without its charm.

Provided that she can forget that she is very little, and that there may be a disposition on some people's parts to make light of her on that account—a disposition which she thinks she is bound to fight against with all her might and main—she may make herself pleasant to those who will be careful not to rub her up the wrong way. She will have plenty to say for herself, a bright smile will illuminate her face, and she will take a delight in amusing those who show that they are disposed to think a great deal of her and to be easily charmed by anything which she may do.

Little women are prone to fascinate big men, but perhaps they have a considerable amount of power over big men in general. But they are endowed with no such capacity for witchery so far as their sisters are concerned. Indeed, there is a certain amount of chronic antagonism between little women and other women, and this prevents them from fraternising together with that cordiality with which women who are in no way physically remarkable can. The ordinary woman will, probably, tell you if you appeal to her for an opinion that the little woman is "a conceited little thing who gives herself all manner of airs and graces." This statement may not be quite correct, but those who generally make it have good cause for believing in its accuracy.

The little woman is in the habit of treating them with a degree of scorn, not to say contempt, which is calculated to have a most irritating effect upon their nerves. The constant contemplation of her own insignificance has ruffled her temper, though her very smallness is in some cases a point in her favour rather than against it. But constant fighting, even if it is only with shadows, has a decidedly exasperating tendency. Now, she is continually doing battle with what she and some others may be disposed to consider her weak point.

It is easy to see how keenly she feels the sting of being small. She not only assumes an aggressive attitude towards a great portion of humanity on that account; she allows the fact to influence her in matters of taste and her every-day life. If she has a house she will have everything in it on as big a scale as possible; she will love big horses and big dogs; she will, as we have already said, probably marry a big man; and she will in a variety of ways indicate her affection for the magnificent as compared with the insignificant.

All this may be regarded as a sort of protest on her part against her own littleness. It is another proof that people would like to be just what they are not, and to get just what they lack. Though her foibles and eccentricities are many she can be forgiven them, in view of their causes. At the same time, she may be recommended to make herself a little more agreeable. She would be more agreeable if she were less egotistical and aggressive. Perhaps we should say that we have spoken of typical little women, not of all little women.

CASTOR OIL PLANT.

ORIGINALLY a native of Asia, the castor oil plant is now naturalised in Africa, America, and the south of Europe. This plant has been known from the remotest ages; its seeds have been found in some Egyptian sarcophagi, supposed to have been at least 4,000 years old. It is singular that the oil expressed from its seeds should have been used by the ancients, including the Jews, as one of their pleasantest oils for burning, and for several domestic uses, though its medicinal virtues were unknown. The modern Jews of London use this oil by the name of oil of kiki for their Sabbath lamps; it being one of the five kinds of oil their traditions allow them to burn on such occasions.

In some parts of Europe this shrub is not more than three or four feet high, yet in its native country it is a potentill, fifteen or twenty feet high, with a thick stem. In cold climates it becomes an annual, though there are many other instances of perennial plants becoming annuals by change of climate. The rapid growth of the plant is illustrated by an instance reported in Tennessee. A castor bean was planted in May, in a garden in Memphis, and in November it had grown to the height of twenty-three feet, with a spread of foliage fifteen feet in diameter. The trunk, ten inches above ground, was eighteen inches in circumference.

The castor oil plant is extensively cultivated all over India. The plant is cultivated at Lucknow as a mixed crop. It is sown in June by almost all the villagers, principally for their own use for purposes of illumination. There are 67,000 acres under castor oil in the Madras Presidency. The manufacture of castor oil is actively carried on in the United States, especially at St. Louis, the beans being largely produced in Southern Illinois.

In 1875, official returns give 24,145 acres under this culture in Kansas, producing 361,386 bushels of seed. In Iowa it has been found a profitable crop, the yield being fifteen to twenty-five bushels of seed per acre.

FACETIE.

AUTUMN.

(By a Lady.)

PRATE not to me of autumn's hues,
The golden beauty of the falls;
I hate the chill October dews,
Poor summer's cold and clammy pall.
'Tis very well with pen to praise
Autumnal tints on bough and stem,
The glowing sunsets it displays—
They come at five o'clock, p.m.

I very much prefer the spring,
For summer then is looming near;
I cannot bear the months that bring
The winter-time so dark and drear.
'Tis very well to flee the town
This time of year abroad to roam,
But when the leaves are turning brown
I am condemned to stay at home.
Look out upon the dismal street—
The cheap amusement is denied
Of watching passers; saving feet
Umbrellas scrutiny decide.
To think not long ago 'twas light
At nine o'clock; and down the
stream
When evenings were warm and bright,
You floated with—it seems a
dream!

I have a mind to leap, I own,
The suicidal month is nigh—
From one of those grey piles of stone
In summer-time we floated by.
I have been likened to a rose—
Oh, dear, if it were only true!
I'd sleep while horrid autumn goes,
And wake again when roses do. —Fun.

WHERE Good Blacksmiths go—To Acton-Iron.
—Fun.

TO OCULISTS.

WANTED, the site for the eye of Cleopatra's Needle. —Punch.

RAILWAY ASSURANCE.

PASSENGER (waiting): "How long is the next train to Cuppleham?"

PORTER: "As long as this 'ere platform, if it don't get smashed in half afore it gets 'ere." —Fun.

A FAIR INDUCEMENT.

EMINENT COACH (to favourite pupil): "Now look here, Adams; if you will only work hard

with me for six months, I promise you three years complete holiday at Oxford!" —Punch.

DEGENERACY.

VETERAN CUB-HUNTER (to friend's very small boy on donkey at Covent-side): "Well, Fred, where is your father?"

SMALL BOY (contemptuously): "Haven't you heard? Why, he's taken to a bicycle!" —Punch.

FROM THE AGRICULTURAL HALL.—The Cook Log outrun by the Corky ditto. —Punch.

A CARA-VANITY.

WHEN does a showman display a confused knowledge of vehicular distinctions?—When he calls "A car-a-van." —Fun.

"AW"—FUL LANGUAGE.—Langrid swells' talk. —Fun.

"PASSING REMARKS."

SENSITIVE YOUNG PERSON: "Are you following me, sir?"

STOLID INDIVIDUAL: "Well, really, miss, you walk so rapidly that I was, but I'm going to pass you now." —Fun.

BURNING QUESTIONS.

MISTRESS: "Anything the matter, cook?"

COOK (hysterically): "I've been upset, mum! That Bill" (the gardener) "has been a-going on about the Heastern Crisis, mum, that I don't hardly feel as I can retain my situation! He's that violent 'Jingo,' mum, and we was always Hulta-liberal in my fan'y!" —Punch.

UNPARALLELED.

SERVANT (in great disgust, to Registrar): "A very nice place you recommended me to, I must say, mum."

REGISTRAR: "Why, what's the matter. They are as rich as can be, and they never look after your perquisites."

SERVANT: "Rich, indeed! Why, when I went there to apply for the situation I see'd two young ladies both a-sitting at the same piano." —Judy.

FROM OUR HARD-UP CONTRIBUTOR.

WHEN is a five-pound note like a picture at an auction?—When it's "gone." —Judy.

FALLACIES OF THE COUNTRY.

THAT you can have the waggonette whenever you like.

That you are sure of getting plenty of fresh vegetables and fruit.

That some beautiful village or lovely view is about two miles off—whereas it turns out to be nearer four.

That in the country you will accomplish what you have long contemplated—the study of the Spanish or Saskatchewan languages.

That there will be abundance of cream and new-laid eggs.

That you will have ample time for reading, and that you will get through a great many books which you have long intended to study.

That you will take up botany, or ichthyology, or some other scientific pursuit.

That you are sure to find rare wild flowers, ferns, insects, lepidoptera, &c., in abundance.

That you will rise at a much earlier hour than is your custom at home.

That you will have an enormous appetite.

That you will be able to clear off your arrears of letter-writing.

That you will not require your dress clothes.

That you will return home from the country the picture of health and strength. —Punch.

OPINIONS.

"Do you consider Victor Hugo a luminous writer?" asked a Frenchman of an American.

"Yes—voluminous," was the reply. "And now," said the American, "I will ask you if you consider Fenimore Cooper an original writer?"

"Yes," answered the Frenchman, and then he added, with a shrug, "aboriginal."

MUSICAL QUERY.—Does a vocal score consist of twenty notes? —Funny Folks.

HOUSEHOLD CONVENIENCES.

A GENTLEMAN who had lately built a house was showing it to a friend, and with great glee was pointing out all its various accommodations.

"My dear sir," interrupted the other, "have you made the staircase wide enough to bring down your own coffin?"

DIDN'T TAKE LONG.

"How did you come to get married?" asked a man of a very homely friend.

"Well, you see," he replied, "after I'd vainly tried to win several girls that I wanted, I finally turned my attention to one that wanted me, and then it didn't take long to fix things."

A RURAL poet wrote: "The Ballad of the Fisherman" as follows:

"He put his bait upon the hook,
And then his home-made pole he took,
And held it o'er the dancing brook,
And soon had something for to cook."

"I NEVER thought but once," said old Deacon Webbing, "that it was a sin to steal an umbrella." "And when was that?" asked a friend. "It was when some pesky thief stole my new silk one," answered the deacon.

"Ma," said a little girl, "if you'll let me buy some candy I'll be real good." "My child," solemnly responded the mother, "you should not be good for pay; you should be good for nothing."

"JUDGE," said a lawyer to "his honour," during a lull in a case on trial, "what do you consider the best illustrated paper?" "A thousand pound bank-note," growled the judge.

"Ah! your grace," said Lord Palmerston to the lovely Duchess of Sutherland, "your beauty kills time." "And time always kills beauty at last," sighed the duchess.

A LADY thought she'd pose a man by asking him, "What sort of razors are used in shaving notes?" but he quietly answered, "Raisers of money."

"I WOULDN'T serve in an oil-shop," said a young man to his friend. "Why not?" "Because it's a serv-ile position."

"I DON'T think I paid too much for my whistle originally," said an old toper, "but it's ruined me to keep it wet."

WHY are schools called seminaries? We hope it isn't because they only half teach anything.

SOME people call soup a good preface to a dinner, but a good work seldom needs a preface.

It is rather a strange fact that while the directors of the City Bank are locked up in the Glasgow prison, the prison funds are locked up in the City Bank.

THE SHERIFF'S REPLY.

A SCOTCH sheriff being directed to summon a jury, said to the judge:

"Where shall I get a panel?"

To which his honour replied:

"Why, I suppose you can get panels enough out of doors."

STATISTICS.

THE PARIS EXHIBITION.—The total number of awards accorded to each nation at the Exhibition is given by the "Liberté," but the silver and bronze medals and honourable mentions argue quantity rather than quality. The best criterion of the latter is the number of grand prizes and gold medals. Of these France carried off 1,964; England and her colonies, 369; Austria-Hungary, 252; Belgium, 184; Spain, 167; Italy, 157; United States, 145; Russia, 123; Switzerland, 86; Holland, 70; Sweden

and Norway, 70; the French colonies, 57; Denmark, 27; Greece, 12. As to the distinctions of all kinds, France, of course, stands first, with 13,569; Spain and her colonies coming next, with 2,500; England and her colonies third, 2,455; and Austria fourth, with 1,770. The Spanish aggregate exceeds the English by reason of a larger number of minor awards—viz., 829 bronze medals and 964 honourable mentions, as compared with 779 and 647.

HORSE-SHOE LUCK.

GEORGE CARAWAY opened a blacksmith shop

Near a tavern where draymen were wont to stop,

And that he might add to his daily score,
He nailed up a horse-shoe over the door.
"I'll keep the witches away," said he,
"And the best of luck will come in to me;
For whether we work or whether we play,
'Tis good to keep the witches away."

Who keeps a forge must attend the fire,
And be ready to rivet the broken tire,
To drive the nail with a steady stroke,
To mend the hub or replace the spoke,
To swing the hammer with steady hold
Till out of the iron there comes the gold;
For men must labour from day to day,
If they want to keep the witches away.

The tavern was near. And this foolish
George

Frequented the bar and forsook the forge,
Till his customers found 'twas no use to stop

For a hurried job at the blacksmith's shop.

When George's funds began to run low,
He'd go to work and the bellows blow
And strike on the anvil with hearty whack,
But the luck that had left him would not come back.

He drove in the horse-shoe an extra nail,
And changed its quarters, without avail,
For a handy blacksmith, with ruddy forge,
Appeared as a rival to foolish George;
And his fame soon travelled the country round.

For where he was wanted there he was found,

And many went out of their way to stop
At the cheerful and tidy blacksmith shop.

And—would you believe it?—this foolish
George,

Who favoured the tavern and not the forge,

Cursing his luck, as such people will,
Kept drinking from morning till night,
until

His credit was gone, and his money too,
And a long, long bill at the inn was due,
And the shop with the horse-shoe over the door

Was sold by the sheriff to pay the score.

To keep luck in and the witches away,
We must bravely struggle from day to day;

If ease we covet, and labour shun,
The odds are against us, ten to one.

And the lessons taught us by foolish
George,

Is to hammer away at the honest forge;
For doing our duty with manly pluck
Is better than waiting for horse-shoe luck.

J. P.

GEMS.

Common sense is very uncommon, though each man thinks he has enough of it.

The greatest glory of a freeborn people is to transmit that freedom to their children.

You may judge pretty well as to a woman's secret vice, by observing what she condemns most fiercely in others.

We are apt to believe in Providence so long as we have our way; but if things go awry, then we think, if there is a God, he is in heaven, and not on earth. The cricket in the Spring builds his house in the meadow, and chirps for joy, because all is going so well.

MAN doubles the evils of life by pondering over them; a scratch becomes a wound, a slight injury, a jest an insult, a small peril a great danger, and a slight indisposition a deadly illness.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

TO BAKE A TURKEY.—Let the turkey be picked, singed, washed and wiped, inside and out; joint only to the first joints in the legs; cut a dozen small gashes in the fleshy parts of the turkey, and press one whole oyster in each gash; then close the skin and flesh over each oyster as tightly as possible; stuff the turkey, leaving a little room for the turkey to swell. When stuffed, sew it up tightly, rub over lightly with flour, sprinkle a little salt and pepper on it, put some water in your dripping-pan, put in the turkey, baste it often with its own dripping, bake to a nice brown; thicken your gravy with a little flour and water. Be sure and keep the bottom of the dripping-pan covered with water, or it will burn the gravy, and make it bitter.

A MILK TEST.—It is difficult to find milk in this city pure enough to determine the experiment, but a German paper gives a very simple test for watered milk. A well polished knitting needle is dipped into a deep vessel of milk, and immediately withdrawn in an upright position. If the sample is pure, some of the fluid will hang to the needle; but if water has been added to the milk, even in small proportions, the fluid will not adhere to the needle.

MISCELLANEOUS.

NATIVE signatures in Mysore frequently illustrate the occupation of the writer. Thus a cultivator will make a mark resembling a plough with two dots for bullocks, a cartdriver the mark of a wheel, a barber that of a razor, &c. Women make a round mark, supposed to represent a bangle.

BURGLARY appears to be a very profitable profession in America. Two burglars now in New Hampshire Prison state that they had seventy successful professional "engagements" within the last eighteen months, and are now caught for the first time.

THE German Empress has presented Lady George Gordon Lennox, Lady Elizabeth Bryan, Mrs. Osborne, Mrs. Jones, Mrs. Daniell, and Mrs. McConnell with golden brooches in recognition of the active sympathy displayed by them on the occasion of the loss of the Grosser Kurfürst.

THE Russian colony has received its usual reinforcements. Princess Lisa Troubetzkoi is on the point of returning to Paris, and Prince and Princess Radziwill will, on and after January next, take up their residence in the splendid hotel in the Avenue de la Tour Maubourg, which they have bought from Prince Bibesco.

MAJOR-GENERAL HUTCHINSON, R.E., has officially inspected the second and last section of the Alexandra Palace branch of the Great Eastern Railway, which runs from the Seven Sisters station on the Metropolitan Extension to Wood-green.

NELLIE KEELER, the artist in the dwarf line on exhibition at Gilmore's Garden, is eleven years old, weighs only twelve pounds, and is 25 inches high. Barnum calls her "The Indiana Midget."

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

JAMES.—Send an official inquiry to the War Office, Whitehall.

WILL.—Your inquiry must be a local one. Consult a file of the Glasgow papers.

N.—The flow of your verses is fair, but here our praise must end. The thought is by far too commonplace for insertion in our columns.

GERTRUDE.—Constancy in affection, according to the usual interpretation.

ALF.—In poetry it is allowable to have a syllable too much at times; and in fact the Spenserian stanza and the verse called Alexandrine are cases in illustration. Take, for example, the exquisite effect of the word "tremulous" in the following splendid passage:

"The moist and glaucous light that lies
Upon the deep reflects your eyes
In its unclouded hues,
And those soft silken lashes move
In tremulous fluttering as above
The sea the hovering mews."

We cite from the poem "To a Nereid," one of the most lovely little lyrics of modern times. Sir Walter Scott frequently adopts the verbal device we have just noticed.

FLORENCE N.—You say you wish to learn bicycling as a "profession." We do not understand you, and don't think ladies would look well on bicycles.

WILEY.—Apply to a doctor.

MABEL.—Four months, we believe.

LOUISA B.—1. Yes, it is quite in order for a young lady to send her sweetheart a birthday present. It need not be an expensive one. Give him a useful article—an everyday want. 2. Look down the newspaper advertisements; you will soon see something. 3. No.

ENGLISH.—We are unable to tell you the cheapest firm in England at which to buy corkwood.

F. T. B. (Petersborough.)—You require practice to render your handwriting freer. A good method that will tend to cure stammering is to repeat several words aloud to yourself, but very slowly at first, for half an hour each day.

JAMES.—Manifestly the subject is of too extremely delicate a nature to receive a satisfactory reply in these columns.

DAISY.—There are many law stationers in London, and it is to them you should apply. But the remuneration is slight, and the field is, we are afraid, fearfully preoccupied.

SPIRIT.—Your own feminine heart will best supply an answer—far better than we can. There are good men both fair and dark, and complexion cannot determine character.

JOE.—Do not fear about the matter. It will come all right in time.

EDWARD.—Hannah (Hebrew) means a mistress in the sense of dominus; Edward is of Saxon origin, and its original meaning is doubtful.

ROBERT T.—Take some good tonic, say for example a mild preparation of quinine and iron, such as any chemist would readily supply you with. Sponge with cold water every morning, have as much air and exercise as possible, and cultivate cheerful society. There is no reason whatever why you should indulge gloomy thoughts.

L. B.—The doctrine of syllogism, in the terminology of Logic, implies a major premise, a minor premise, and a conclusion.

"All men are mortal (major),
We are men (minor),
Therefore we are mortal (conclusion)."

The most lucid exposition of the whole matter is to be found in Whately's Logic. Dr. Watts is quite superseded.

S. B.—Announce in the usual manner, like all our other correspondents, and your communication shall receive every attention.

READER.—We cannot say. Inquire of a music publisher.

CONSTANCE.—Bridesmaids usually wear white. The material and the style depend upon the nature of the bride's dress.

LITTLE PET, twenty-two, fair, would like to correspond with a young gentleman with a view to matrimony. Must be dark.

E. P., twenty, medium height, dark hair, hazel eyes, would like to correspond with a seaman in the Royal Navy.

LILIAN and ETHEL, two friends, wish to correspond with two young men. Lilian is twenty-five, brown hair, blue eyes, medium height. Ethel is eighteen, light hair, dark eyes.

BRACE and BIR, two joiners, would like to correspond with two thoroughly domesticated young ladies with a view to matrimony. Brace is twenty-two, fond of home, loving. Bit is twenty-one, tall. Respondents must be good-looking.

POLLY and ANNIE, two friends, would like to correspond with two young gentlemen. Polly is twenty-one, dark, handsome. Annie is eighteen, dark, of a loving disposition, fond of home and children. Respondents must be about twenty-three.

W. J. B. and C. H. C., two friends, would like to correspond with two young ladies. W. J. B. is twenty-two, dark hair, blue eyes, fond of home. C. H. C. is twenty-one, tall, hazel eyes, loving, fond of music and dancing. Respondents must be about twenty.

THE OLD SCHOOL BOOKS.

WHAT pleasant memories cluster round these volumes old and worn.
With covers smirched, and bindings creased, and pages thumbed and torn!
These are the books we used to con, I and poor brother Will,
When we were boys together in the school-house on the hill.

Well I recall the nights at home, when side by side we sat

Before the fire, and o'er these books indulged in whispered chat;

And how, when father chided us for idling time away,

Our eyes bent to the task as though they'd never been astray.

The old-time proverbs scribbled here, the caution to beware,

'Steal not this book, my honest friend,' scrawled roughly here and there;

The blurs, the blots, the luncheon-spots, the numberless dog's ears,

The faded names, the pictures, and, alas! the stains of tears—

All take me back in mind to days when cloudless was the sky,

When grief was so short-lived I smiled before my tears were dry;

When next to father's angry frown I feared the awful nod

That doomed me, trembling, to advance and bow beneath the rod.

How bright those days! Our little cares, our momentary fears,

And e'en our pains evanished with a burst of sob and tears;

And every joy seemed great enough to balance all our woe;

What pity that when griefs are real they can't be balanced so!

The school-house stands in ruins now, the boys have scattered wide,

A few are old and gray like me, but nearly all have died;

And brother Will is one of these; his curly head was hid

Down by the brook, at father's side, beneath the willow's shade.

These books, so quaint and queer to you, to me are living things;

Each has its story of the past, and each a message brings;

Where'er I sit at eventide, and turn their pages o'er,

They seem to speak in tones that thrilled my hearts in days of yore.

The schoolboy of to-day would laugh, and throw these old books by;

But think you, neighbour, could his heart consent if he were I?

G. B.

LAUGHING MILLY, nineteen, dark, would like to correspond with a tall young man about twenty, and in a good position.

THOMAS DAVID N., twenty-two, good-tempered, hazel eyes, of a loving disposition, fond of home and children, would like to correspond with a young lady with a view to matrimony.

B. B. and S. M., two friends, would like to correspond with two young men. B. B. is twenty, medium height, light hair, fair, thoroughly domesticated. S. M. is thirty, tall, dark brown hair, loving. Respondents must be about the same age, fond of home.

IDA and BETTIE, two friends, would like to correspond with two seamen in the Royal Navy. Ida is twenty. Bettie is sixteen.

J. M. L., twenty-three, good-looking, tall, would like to correspond with a young lady about twenty, and fond of home.

S. C. G., twenty-four, light hair, would like to correspond with a good-looking young lady, light hair, blue eyes.

A. C. S., twenty-two, dark hair and eyes, would like to correspond with a young gentleman with a view to matrimony.

B. T. and F. F., two seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with two young ladies with a view to matrimony. B. T. is fair. F. F. is dark. Respondents must be fond of home and music.

L. B. and K. R., two friends, would like to correspond with two young ladies. L. B. is twenty-two, of medium height, fair, loving. K. R. is twenty, tall, dark, good-looking.

TED, nineteen, blue eyes, medium height, would like to correspond with a young lady who is fond of home and music.

D. K., twenty-two, brown hair, hazel eyes, of a loving disposition, would like to correspond with a gentleman. Must be about twenty-five, fond of home, fair, and blue eyes.

H. F., twenty-two, dark blue eyes, tall, fair, domesticated, would like to correspond with a young gentleman with a view to matrimony. Must be twenty-five, dark hair and eyes.

S. G. and C. G., two friends, would like to correspond with two young ladies with a view to matrimony. S. G. is twenty-four, dark, handsome. C. G. is fair, blue eyes, good-tempered.

B. P. and W. F., two friends, would like to correspond with two young ladies. B. P. is twenty, medium height, good-looking, dark hair and eyes. W. F. is twenty-one, fond of home and music.

L. W. and R. P., two friends, would like to correspond with two young men. L. W. is twenty, tall, brown hair, dark eyes, fond of home. R. P. is twenty-four, medium height, dark brown hair, blue eyes, and very fond of music.

C. H. and B. J., two friends, would like to correspond with two young ladies. C. H. is twenty-two, tall, dark, dark hair and eyes. B. J. is twenty-two, brown hair, blue eyes, fond of home. Respondents must be twenty, loving.

CLARE H., twenty-two, fond of home and children, loving, golden hair, blue eyes, would like to correspond with a young man about twenty-four, dark hair, brown eyes, medium height, good-looking, fond of home and children.

LAURA CONSTANCE, eighteen, tall, dark hair, blue eyes, would like to correspond with a young man about the same age.

T. B., twenty-two, dark hair, hazel eyes, medium height, fond of home, wishes to correspond with a young man about twenty-six, good-looking, medium height, fond of home.

G. W. D., twenty-two, fair, would like to correspond with a good-looking young lady with a view to matrimony.

NETTIE, fair, fond of music, tall, would like to correspond with a good-looking young man with a view to matrimony.

K. M. and W. D., two friends, would like to correspond with two young ladies. K. M. is twenty-one, fair, brown hair, blue eyes, good-tempered. W. D. is seventeen, medium height, dark brown hair, blue eyes, of a loving disposition.

H. L. and H. B., two friends, would like to correspond with two seamen in the Royal Navy. H. L. is dark, tall, hazel eyes, fond of home and dancing. H. B. is twenty, light brown hair and eyes.

LAURETTE, twenty, light brown hair, gray eyes, dark, fond of home and children, medium height, wishes to correspond with a young man about the same age, fair, fond of home.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

T. H. is responded to by—Kate, eighteen, medium height.

K. D. by—Minnie, eighteen, tall.

ADA by—G. C., twenty-nine, medium height, fond of home.

ISHMAEL by—Nellie W., twenty, fond of home and children.

LILLIE by—Bumkin, twenty, light hair, of a loving disposition.

P. A. by—C. H., twenty-five, good-looking, fair, fond of music.

W. J. by—E. D., twenty-six, dark blue eyes, medium height, fair.

EDITH by—Dick, nineteen, brown hair and eyes.

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